FOCUS FEATURES INTERNATIONAL

Last Days on Mars

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Based on the short story 'The Animators'
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Credits not contractual

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(in alphabetical order)

BRUNEL	Mission Commander, Pilot, Atmospheric scientist
DALBY	Medical officer, Life-support systems specialist
HARRINGTON	Communications specialist, Engineer
KIM	Deputy Commander, Co-pilot, Geologist
LANE	Biochemist, back-up navigator
PUGH	Paleogeologist, Mission equipment maintenance
SHAW	Psychological welfare officer, Mission data collator
VINCENT	Deputy Commander, Navigator, Environmental scientist

“LAST DAYS ON MARS”

1 EXT. MESA. DAY 1

A cratered, potato-shaped moon -- Phobos -- rolls across a purple sky.

Below, a manned, six-wheeled electric Rover PURRS across the top of a rugged mesa. It slows to a halt near the edge, as if admiring the stunning view across the canyon below.

Superimpose: ‘2036 - FIRST MANNED MARS MISSION - DAY 179’

The rear airlock door of the Rover HISSES open and two helmeted figures climb out.

LANE opens a locker at the side of the Rover, unloading her kit -- but VINCENT is momentarily distracted by the view.

VINCENT
Say goodbye to it.

LANE
Getting sentimental already?

He turns back towards her with a wry smile -- and she immediately puts a gloved hand behind her back.

LANE (CONT’D)
Gamma sensor or weather station?

VINCENT
We’ll do each one together.

LANE
I thought we were on a tight schedule? C’mon.

With a reluctant SIGH he also puts a hand behind his back. Rock, paper, scissors. Lane counts down silently, 3,2,1.

Vincent sticks out a fist -- Lane, two fingers. She loses.

LANE (CONT’D)
Dammit. Every time.

With amused exasperation she picks up her kit. LUGS it towards the mini weather station two hundred metres away.

Vincent merely has to walk a few metres to service the small, pod-like gamma-ray sensor set into the ground.

Meanwhile, as Lane walks onwards, she seems disinclined to gaze out over the vast canyon. But she steals a glance.

She looks at the weather station ahead -- nearly there, now -- then briefly glances again at the scenery ...

She stops. Aghast.

Out of nowhere, a towering, boiling cloud of red dust begins sweeping up the canyon like an incoming tsunami.

LANE (CONT'D)
Oh, shit. Vincent!

She drops her kit and SPRINTS back towards the Rover. In the distance, Vincent gesticulates to her wildly.

VINCENT
(over helmet radio)
Lane, get down! Down!

But Lane doesn't get it. She keeps running for the safety of the Rover -- half-way there -- copying Vincent, who's already at the Rover's airlock.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I'm gonna --

And the wall of dust HITS like an express train.

Lane is KNOCKED off her feet and plunged into darkness. She CRASHES to the ground, the storm HOWLING around her.

LANE
Vincent? Vincent, come in!

No reply except STATIC.

She turns on her torch but can't see a bloody thing. Begins crawling forwards blindly, BUFFETED all the way.

VINCENT

meanwhile, is struggling to pull open the Rover's airlock door against the vicious force of the GALE.

Forces it open enough to squeeze inside -- then it SLAMS shut behind him.

CUT TO:

2 INT. ROVER 1 - AIRLOCK. DAY 2

As the storm RAGES outside, shaking the vehicle, Vincent waits anxiously in the cramped airlock as it pressurises.

VINCENT
(into helmet radio)
Lane, can you hear me?

But before he can even listen for a reply, the Rover TILTS sideways, buoyed by a violent updraft ...

... then drops back with a BANG, tossing Vincent around inside the confined space and SLAMMING him into the walls.

He YELLS involuntarily, sweat breaking out. JABS the air-cycle button again, trying impotently to hurry it.

Then another violent updraft strikes.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. MESA. DAY 3

Despite the wide-axle configuration, one side of the Rover is lifted clean off the ground. Remains poised dangerously just for a second --

Then CRASHES back down, hard, onto all six wheels.

Something's clearly been shaken loose -- because the Rover now begins to roll ...

... intermittently pushed along, GUST by powerful GUST, towards the cliff edge.

CUT TO:

4 INT. ROVER 1 - AIRLOCK. DAY 4

Still trapped in the airlock, Vincent can feel the movement -- and now he's really afraid.

Adrenaline pumping, he yanks off his helmet, even though the airlock's not up to full pressure ...

... then begins hyperventilating in the thin air.

The Rover again LURCHES violently.

VINCENT
Shit!

He BASHES at the airlock controls with his hands. Tries to CLAW the inner door open.

Almost loses it.

Then, cycle complete, the door-seal CRACKS open and Vincent TUMBLES through into the passenger cabin.

He stays down on his hands and knees for a few moments, GASPING, pulling himself back under control.

Then he makes a dash for the driver's seat.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. MESA. DAY 5

Lane finds the shelter of a low ledge of rock, and manages a crouching-run in the direction she last saw the Rover.

Then she's out into the GALE again, groping ahead, barely able to walk. Rover's got to be around here somewhere.

For a moment the wind drops and the dust clears ...

... and Lane is horrified to see the tail-lights of the Rover as it turns from the edge of the mesa and RUMBLES away, seeking safety.

LANE
Vincent, I'm here. Wait!

She stumbles after it, desperate -- but the STORM abruptly worsens and the fast-receding tail-lights are swallowed up again in dust and darkness.

She's been abandoned.

She staggers onwards blindly -- until a savage GUST again blows her off her feet and she CRASHES down, winded.

Clings to a rock as the STORM threatens to lift her away.

LANE'S POV

as she GASPS raggedly inside the cocoon-like helmet -- each BREATH strained by fear and exertion.

The storm outside is muffled, but stones and gravel CLATTER against her visor. Nothing else is visible. She's blind.

And alone.

Then, out of the darkness of the storm, two eyes appear.

No, not eyes -- headlights. Salvation.

The next moment Vincent appears, tethered to the Rover by a safety rope, torch in hand, struggling against the wind.

CUT TO:

6 INT. ROVER 1. DAY 6

Vincent and Lane STUMBLE in through the airlock -- then collapse, coming down from the adrenaline rush.

As they pull off their helmets we get a good look at them for the first time: Lane is young and atypically attractive. In a tight-corner, she'd be there for you.

Vincent is unassuming, thoughtful, obsessive -- sometimes, haunted. Right now, he's badly shaken and still recovering.

VINCENT
In one piece?

LANE
(a nod)
I thought for a minute ...

She trails off, flushed and guilty.

VINCENT
Had to get the Rover away from the cliff edge. But I knew I'd find you on the radar.

As if to punctuate his words a fierce gust ROCKS the Rover.

Spurred on, Vincent gets to his feet and heads to the front.

He jumps into the driver's seat and POWERS UP ...

... but the darkness outside the windscreen begins to abate. The wind eases, and the dashboard radar-screen shows the churning dust-storm moving away to the east.

Lane joins him and they peer outside together.

LANE
First big one of the season.

VINCENT
And its heading towards base.

Vincent quickly toggles the radio switch.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. BASE. DAY 7

A white, dome-shaped habitat on the floor of a rift valley.

HARRINGTON (V.O.)
Thanks Rover one, got the storm on radar. Probably skirt us, but I'll alert Site Nine.

CUT TO:

8 EXT. SITE 9. DAY 8

A dig-site huddled beside a rocky outcrop: comprising crates, clusters of equipment and a two-man storm-shelter.

The edge of the storm is already BATTERING the site.

Two astronauts, PUGH and SHAW, tethered to each other by three metres of rope, are scrambling to tie down equipment.

An abrupt, peripheral TWISTER begins violently SCOOPING UP the sand all around them.

SHAW
Shelter!

Reluctantly, Pugh abandons the gear he was trying to salvage and they struggle towards the storm-shelter.

Open the door against the fierce WIND and duck inside ...

... but before they pull it closed, the storm begins SWIRLING away, out across the oceanic plain nearby.

They give it a few moments to be sure, then they emerge to survey the damage. The place is almost unrecognisable.

SHAW (CONT'D)
So much for your dig.

But Pugh's attention is totally fixed elsewhere -- on a wide depression gouged out by the twister, exposing a previously buried ridge of stratified rock.

PUGH
(entranced)
Oh ... look at those sediments.

SHAW
You're not upset?

PUGH
I'm livid. Christ, if I'd known this was under here ...
(sudden urgency)
Get the tools.

SHAW
(wryly amused)
You don't ever quit, do you.

PUGH
Not on your life.

And Pugh instantly gets to work on the new find.

CUT TO:

9 **FRONT TITLES** -- overlaid on a series of shots showing stunning images of Mars terrain as our astronauts go about their various last-minute operations: 9

Vincent and Lane service the equipment on the mesa; Pugh and Shaw take samples from Site Nine before heading back to base; KIM is at an ancient crater, drilling rock-cores.

ENDING ON:

10 EXT. SITE 5 CRATER. DAY 10

SCREECHING WHINE as a vertically-mounted coring-drill goes into reverse. Draws a half-metre core from the ground.

KIM turns off the power and extracts the rock-core sample.

This woman is a tough-cookie. Young, dynamic, utterly focused. No time even for smiling.

She doesn't bother looking up as Rover one parks at the crater rim nearby.

VINCENT
(over radio)
Kim, you ready to wrap up? Need to allow for ten minutes at Site Two on the way back.

KIM
I want a couple more samples, from the rim over there.

VINCENT
Y'know Brunel wants us back in time for the briefing.

KIM
So he'll wait a few minutes.

CUT TO:

11 INT. ROVER 1 - FRONT CABIN. DAY 11

Vincent looks at his watch, exasperated, then he and Lane share a look that says all we need to know about Kim.

Outside, through the windscreen, Kim drags the coring drill over to a new location, refusing to be hurried.

CUT TO:

12 INT. ROVER 1. DAY 12

Later. The inner airlock door HISSES open as Kim enters, loaded down with core samples.

KIM
Alright, let's go.

Lane has already POWERED UP the buggy. She SNICKS the gears into drive and gets going.

Kim stashes the samples then joins Lane up front -- always wanting to be where the action is. Lane eyes the clock.

LANE
Running late.

KIM
I'll take the heat, don't worry.

She says it wearily, sincerely, surprising Lane. Kim can occasionally be human, after all.

LANE
Get all the samples you wanted?

KIM
Does it matter? We're still going back empty handed.

VINCENT
Hardly that.

KIM
(sarcastic snort)
You gonna list everything we've achieved? Save it. All we've done is pave the road for the next crew.
(pause)
Swap my legs in exchange for staying on, I'd take it.

Outside, a small meteorite STREAKS down and PUNCHES a hole in the ground, a hundred metres to the left. Lane eyes it.

LANE
Me, I'm ready for a blue sky. What about you, Vincent?

VINCENT
(unconvincing)
You bet.

Lane glances at him, catching the hesitant unease in his reply -- but at that moment a VOICE comes over the radio.

BRUNEL
Rover one, what's your position?

Kim rolls her eyes while Lane reaches for the head-set.

CUT TO:

13 INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM. DAY 13

A wedge-shaped control room -- a one-sixth section of the circular base, which is divided up by plastic bulkheads.

Half the room is taken up with sky-link comms, the other half with ground-control. In this latter-section is Brunel, listening to the radio.

LANE
(over radio)
Base, heading back via the hydroponic dome. Sorry we're late.

Brunel is annoyed, but he sucks it in.

BRUNEL
How long?

LANE
Ten minutes in the dome, say fifteen in total.

BRUNEL
Received. But no more delays, please.

Brunel is forty-plus, palpably the mission commander. Tough, fair, competent -- but as we'll see, a soft-touch.

He's joined briefly by Shaw (good-looks, cool intelligence, a watcher) and DALBY (female, intuitive, conscientious). They arrive for the briefing, but Brunel shakes his head.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Can't start without Vincent and Kim. Come back in twenty minutes.

DALBY
Okay ... then why don't we start prepping the med unit for the pre-flight checks?

BRUNEL
Good, make a start. Lots to do.

Shaw and Dalby depart while Brunel heads over to sky-link.

Here, HARRINGTON sits at a bank of monitors: a naive, sensitive soul hiding behind a youthful, carefree exterior.

As he talks on the radio he watches a graphic-display of a Mars-bound space-trajectory showing a ship on-approach.

HARRINGTON
... Received, Aurora. When's your course correction?

AURORA COMMANDER
(over radio)
Final burn in fifty-six minutes.

HARRINGTON
Copy that. Safe orbit.

AURORA COMMANDER
We'll bring her in without any dents, don't worry. You'll have a nice, shiny ship to take home.

HARRINGTON
Appreciate it. Fourteen-eleven zulu, Tantalus base out.

Harrington turns to Brunel, who is waiting expectantly.

BRUNEL
What's her latest ETA?

HARRINGTON
Moved up five hours. Orbit at six-ten tomorrow, touchdown at seventeen hundred.

BRUNEL
Just a day left, then.

The comment is tinged with regret.

HARRINGTON
Gonna be weird, skipper. Can't believe it's already time to go.

BRUNEL
Tell me about it. At least, your age, you've a good shot at coming back.
(rueful)
Reset the touchdown clock.

Brunel looks up at the three digital clocks on the wall -- one reading Greenwich Mean (zulu) Time, the second reading local Mars Rotational Time.

The third is a countdown-clock marked 'AURORA TOUCHDOWN'. The numbers flicker, then reset to 26 hours 48 minutes.

CUT TO:

14 INT. BASE - CORE & LABORATORY. DAY 14

Dalby and Shaw are in the circular corridor surrounding the core of the base. They chat idly as they near the lab.

SHAW
What's the first thing you'll do when you get back home?

DALBY
Let's see ... Hot, candle-lit bath and a glass of wine.

SHAW
Alone?

DALBY
Very funny. What about you?

SHAW
Run on the beach. Look at the sea, breathe the air, and just keep running.

DALBY
Alone?

Touché. Shaw changes the subject.

SHAW
Y'know, we've done well. Bit of luck we'll get through this with a clean bill of health.

DALBY
(only half-joking)
Would've been nice if someone had been ill. Give me a reason for being here.

SHAW
I could say the same. But we've all done our bit.

Dalby smiles, reassured, and pauses by the door of the lab.

DALBY
Catch you up in a minute.

Shaw gives her a knowing smile and departs.

She enters. Walks past banks of scientific equipment and joins PUGH, who's lost in the eyepiece of a microscope.

She looks at him as he works -- her eyes betraying the fact she's stuck on him -- but he's oblivious to her presence.

She picks up a hand-held, long-bladed power-saw used for cutting rock cores. It WHINES briefly as she turns it on -- and Pugh finally looks up.

DALBY (CONT'D)
Meeting's delayed twenty minutes.

But Pugh is still gripped by excitement, lost in his thoughts. Looking at her, he makes a decision. Switches the microscope image up onto a monitor screen.

It displays a 20,000 angstrom bacterial worm-shape.

PUGH
What do you make of that?

Dalby takes in the image -- then looks at him sideways.

DALBY
This is a wind-up, yes?

PUGH
No. Swear to God.

DALBY
(stunned)
I know what it looks like, but...

PUGH
Rock sample from Site Nine. One point two million years.

DALBY
It's got to be contamination. Or a processing artifact.

PUGH
It's neither. It's in the rock.

DALBY
Then something non-organic. How big is it?

PUGH
E. coli scale.

DALBY
Jesus, if you're right ...

She shakes her head at the enormity of it, gazing in awe at the ugly fossil shape and unaccountably getting the shivers.

DALBY (CONT'D)
You need to ask the others.

PUGH
(shaking head)
What I need is a proper sample. This is just a random scraping.

Pugh jumps up, unable to contain himself -- then he pauses.

PUGH (CONT'D)
Hey. Until I'm sure ... our secret?

DALBY
Do you really need to ask?

For the first time, Pugh's eyes display affection. He touches a finger to her lips -- a surreptitious gesture as intimate as a kiss -- then heads out.

CUT TO:

15 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME. DAY 15

A geodesic dome housing hundreds of stacked racks of hydroponic-nurtured plants. Lit by LED low-heat colour-spectrum lights, the plants provide both food and O2.

Also housed in the dome are two self-contained, portacabin-type units -- one, the dome's control room, the other a mini-lab for botanical analysis.

Vincent and Lane are at a switch panel near the airlock, powering down to tick-over mode and taking final readings.

VINCENT
Air recycling at a hundred percent. Right on schedule.

LANE
(with admiration)
You should have a plaque on the wall.

VINCENT
So they know who to blame if it breaks?

She pulls a face at his undue humility.

They look around one last time before shutting down the overhead lights -- just leaving on the eerie glow from the UV LEDs in the plant-racks. Then turn for the airlock.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. SITE 2. DAY 16

Vincent and Lane step out of an airlock protruding from the side of a huge artificial hill -- formed by sand and scree having been bulldozed over the artificial dome within.

They seal the door, give the thumbs up to Kim waiting in the parked Rover, and head for the Rover airlock.

VINCENT
That's it. Let's get back.

They climb inside and the Rover sets off towards base, a third of a mile away across the valley floor.

CUT TO:

17 INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM. DAY 17

Brunel is working beside Harrington, uploading mission-data. Pugh appears next to him.

BRUNEL
What's up?

PUGH
I need to go out.

BRUNEL
Forget it, we've got a briefing.

But Pugh stands his ground, his face signalling that he wants a word in private. Brunel SIGHS. Takes him aside.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Alright, what is it?

PUGH
Seismic sensor at Site Nine's off-line. Must be storm damage.

BRUNEL
Didn't you check it before you came away?

PUGH
(shaking head, contrite)
I'm an idiot.

BRUNEL
Well, I'm sorry but it's too late. Sun's already going down.

PUGH
Skipper ... I signed off on that site. It's gonna look bad for me if the relief crew have to go out and fix it.

Brunel wrestles with it, angry, but Pugh lays it on thick.

PUGH (CONT'D)
I'll be quick.

Finally, exasperated, Brunel gives way.

BRUNEL
Take Harrington.

Pugh nods in humble gratitude -- but he can't fully suppress his excitement as he SLAPS Harrington on the back.

PUGH
Let's go, pal. Rover two.

Harrington rises, bemused, and Brunel nods confirmation.

BRUNEL
Back before dark. Understand?

CUT TO:

18 INT. BASE - AIRLOCK. DAY 18

Kim, Lane and Vincent wait inside the main airlock as the air cycles -- bathed briefly in decontaminant ultra-violet and vapour-like antisepsis spray.

Cycle complete, the inner doors HISS open.

CUT TO:

19 INT. BASE - UTILITY ROOM. DAY 19

Kim, Lane and Vincent step through, taking off their helmets and equipment harnesses and slim-line back-packs.

They cross with Pugh and Harrington, heading out.

KIM
Where're you two going?

PUGH
Soak up a bit more radiation.
(a wink, to them all)
Try making babies after this mission.

LANE
That's not funny, Pugh.

But Pugh smiles as the airlock door closes behind them.

KIM
Terrific! So we bust a gut to get back here while those two ...

Kim furiously UNZIPS her environment suit and heads into the female locker-room. Lane and Vincent exchange a look.

VINCENT
Gonna be fireworks.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. BASE. DAY 20

Pugh and Harrington step outside from the airlock. They bypass the Rover that Kim recently parked, and head to an identical vehicle parked adjacently. Climb in.

CUT TO:

21 INT. ROVER 2. DAY 21

They enter the inner door. Pugh tosses his helmet aside and goes straight to the forward cabin. Begins POWERING UP.

HARRINGTON
So where’re we going? What’s the score?

PUGH
Pugh one, Kim nil.

HARRINGTON
What?

PUGH
Never mind. We’re fixing a broken sensor, didn’t you hear?

And pointedly avoiding Harrington’s gaze, Pugh CLICKS the Rover into gear and they SURGE forward.

CUT TO:

22 INT. BASE - CORE. DAY 22

Vincent is in the circular corridor, grabbing a coffee from the machine. Lane joins him, pulling on her base casuals.

Through an adjacent door, in the control room, they can see Kim and Brunel exchanging low but heated words.

LANE
Who’s your money on?

VINCENT
Are you kidding? Kim’ll win every time.

Lane smiles. Vincent gets a coffee for her.

VINCENT (CONT’D)
She’s got a point. Why does Pugh get a free pass?

LANE
Wouldn’t <u>you</u> rather be milking what’s left of the schedule?

VINCENT
Try to squeeze in too much, that's when things get missed.

LANE
Not if you have anything to do with it.

Vincent forces a smile but Lane senses a latent unease.

LANE (CONT'D)
The trip home bothering you?

VINCENT
(evasive shrug)
Long way back. Anybody screws up, who's gonna help us?

The comment seems to be more about his own failings than anyone else's, and Lane is about to press him on it -- but Shaw joins them, interrupting.

SHAW
Mind if I stand here and observe the fallout?

LANE
What're you talking about?

Shaw points. Kim is heading over -- still fuming from her argument with Brunel but trying hard to keep calm.

She joins them. Picks up a coffee cup, forcing small-talk.

KIM
So what do you reckon? We get back home, we're all gonna start painting pictures and writing poetry, like the Moon walkers.

LANE
(shrug)
It changed them. They all said it.

SHAW
It didn't change them. It revealed who they were.

KIM
Woooo. Deep.

But her forced-calm won't stick. She suddenly SLAMS down the cup and spins away towards the lab.

Shaw throws Lane and Vincent a look that says, 'Told you so,' -- then they all follow after her, curious.

CUT TO:

23 INT. BASE - LABORATORY. DAY 23

Kim is at Pugh's work-station, checking his computer.

The others watch, staying out of it -- but Dalby also enters. She sees what Kim is doing, and is outraged.

DALBY
Hey, what the ...?

KIM
No way Pugh's fretting over a sensor. I wanna know what's so fucking urgent.

DALBY
You can't go through his private log. Vincent, tell her!

VINCENT
Don't look at me.

Exasperated, Dalby spins and heads out. Vincent SIGHS.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Dalby's right, Kim.

KIM
Eat me. Why's he think his work's more important than --

She stops, stunned, as the microscopic worm-shape image pops up onto the screen.

They all gaze at it in awe -- then Kim snaps out of it.

KIM (CONT'D)
Okay. That's not what it looks like.

LANE
You sure? Those cavities in the rock could be microbial borings.

Lane takes over. Pulls up the sample's mineral analysis.

LANE (CONT'D)
No offense but did Pugh understand any of this? Look at the hydrocarbons.

KIM
Yeah, so? P.A.H.'s can be formed non-organically.

LANE
Not in these ratios. Is the sample still under the scope?

They fiddle with the scope as Dalby returns, Brunel in tow.

BRUNEL
Alright, now what the hell?
(Kim & Lane ignore him)
Anybody?

SHAW
Give them a minute, skipper.

Kim is adjusting the sample under the microscope -- trying her damnedest to rain on Pugh's parade.

KIM
This is bullshit. He's found a piece of abiotic mineral.

LANE
(re: sample)
No, back a bit. Refocus there.

The image shifts depth-of-field. Two more frozen worm-shapes sharpen into focus, hiding in a narrow crack.

One is half-inside a bore-hole, the other is longer and pinched tightly in the middle, as if about to split in two.

LANE (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ.

BRUNEL
That looks like ...

LANE
Bacteria caught in the process of dividing.
(pause)
This is it. You're looking at proof that life existed on Mars.

It's a massive moment -- and we hold on the group as they struggle to process the awesome revelation.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. MARE BOREUM. DUSK 24

The Rover crests a small rise -- and stretched out before it is a vast plain, once the bed of a long-extinct ocean.

The shrunken sun is now kissing the horizon and the skies have taken on the weird blue twilight of Mars.

CUT TO:

25 INT. ROVER 2. DUSK 25

Harrington gazes out at the spectacular view.

HARRINGTON
What do you reckon it would've been like to surf in forty percent gravity?

But Pugh's not even looking. He steers left and follows the ancient, cratered shore-line.

PUGH
Nearly there.

HARRINGTON
Hope we're not gonna be long. Temp's already down to minus forty.

PUGH
It takes as long as it takes.

He steers around an outcrop of rock -- and before them is

SITE 9

Pugh parks the Rover and powers down. Jumps up and begins grabbing gear from the overhead lockers.

PUGH (CONT'D)
You want to speed things up, prep the sample boxes. Date, grid-ref, and prefix MA-1 for microscopic anomaly.

HARRINGTON
Wha -- ?
(truth dawning)
No way! Does Brunel know?

PUGH
Look, what's everybody back home gagging for? Why did we come here?

HARRINGTON
I don't care. You can't just --

PUGH
(cutting him off)
Trust me, okay. Bring the boxes out when they're ready.

Pugh quickly SLOTS on a helmet and steps into the airlock.

HARRINGTON
Wait, hazardous areas we're supposed to be roped --

But Pugh SLAMS the door and begins cycling the air.

HARRINGTON (CONT'D)
Shit!!

Fraught at being caught up in Pugh's deception, Harrington wavers for a moment, wondering what the hell to do.

Then, rattled, he begins unloading the sterile sample boxes from the lockers.

CUT TO:

26 INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM. DUSK 26

Brunel heads briskly into the control room, the others in tow -- all of them still trying to process the profound shock of the discovery.

BRUNEL
We'll upload the scans and data to mission control. See if they confirm Lane's conclusion.

DALBY
Pugh is gonna have a flying fit!

BRUNEL
He should've thought about that before playing stupid games.

LANE
Christ, Dalby, why didn't he just come and talk to us?

KIM
Too much like sharing credit.

DALBY
That's not fair!

KIM
Isn't it?

Under Kim's glare, Dalby flushes, busted. Vincent steps into the tense pause.

VINCENT
I think we're missing the point. Pugh's out there right now.

Brunel looks at him, not understanding.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Skipper, Site Nine's just become the most important spot in the entire solar system.

LANE
He's right. It needs sealing off for a full forensic excavation. We can't risk destroying a single grain of sand.

DALBY
Pugh knows what he's doing.

KIM
(to Brunel)
The most important discovery in human history. You gonna trust Pugh with that now?

Point taken, Brunel immediately heads for the radio.

CUT TO:

27 INT. ROVER 2. DUSK 27

Visible through the windscreen, about twenty metres away, Pugh is busy working on the stratified rock layer.

Meanwhile, inside, Harrington is about to put on his helmet and join Pugh when the dashboard radio CRACKLES into life.

BRUNEL
(over radio)
Rover two from base. Are you at Site Nine yet?

Harrington panics. Wavers for a moment, torn -- then toggles the radio, trying to sound casual.

HARRINGTON
Got here a few minutes ago. What's up, skipper?

BRUNEL
I'm declaring the site off-limits. Put Pugh on the mike. Right now.

HARRINGTON
Er ... Stand by, base.
(switching frequency)
Pugh, we're on a private channel. Did you copy that?

CUT TO:

28 EXT. SITE 9. DUSK 28

Pugh is crouched in the depression beside the low-lying ridge of rock with exposed sedimentary layers.

He's carefully splitting layers with a hammer and a chisel.

PUGH
Negative.

HARRINGTON
(over radio)
You mean you didn't hear, or you didn't want to hear?

PUGH
Look, I'm busy, okay? Tell them the signal's breaking up. Tell them ...
(freezing)
Christ on a bike!

He's found something.

We don't yet see it -- but it's clearly a stunning find.

PUGH (CONT'D)
Harrington, get out here.

HARRINGTON
What!? I've got Brunel holding on the --

PUGH
Just get out here! I've found something.
(still stunned)
Where's the camera?

He stands, reaching for the tool box -- and there's a sudden SPLINTERING CRACK.

The ground shifts an inch. Pugh freezes.

Looks down at his feet where a jagged fissure has appeared.

Next second, the whole thing GIVES WAY -- and Pugh plunges into blackness.

CUT TO:

29 INT. ROVER 2. DUSK 29

Harrington is still watching through the windscreen. Where Pugh previously stood, there's now a gaping black hole, dust billowing out.

HARRINGTON
(a yell)
Pugh!

The reply is nothing more than a CHOKING RASP.

FOLLOWING HARRINGTON

as he jams on his helmet, grabs a rope and emergency oxygen-bottle and bolts for the

AIRLOCK

SLAMS the door and HITS the button. Locks on his helmet as the air HISSES out of the confined space.

HARRINGTON (CONT'D)
Come on. Come on!

CUT TO:

30 EXT. SITE 9 - THE PIT. DUSK 30

Pugh is amidst choking dust at the bottom of a three-metre deep pit -- his visor cracked and a razor-sharp slab of broken rock pushed clean through his suit into his shoulder.

He's CONVULSING violently -- air leaking away and blood evaporating in the low-pressure deep cold.

A coughing, gasping DEATH-RATTLE in his throat.

CUT TO:

31 INT/EXT. ROVER 2/SITE 9. DUSK 31

In the Rover, the airlock light turns green.

Harrington PUNCHES the button. Jumps out. Runs over to

THE PIT

The cloud of dust thrown up by the collapse is clearing and Pugh is visible -- his CONVULSIONS rapidly weakening.

HARRINGTON
Hold on!

Harrington tosses the oxygen bottle down.

Runs to the Rover and HOOKS the rope onto a utility bar. Feeds it out as he runs back to the pit.

But too late. Pugh is lying contorted -- deathly-still.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. SITE 9. DUSK 32

The sun is down as Rover one RACES along the shoreline, churning up dust. SKIDS to a halt behind Rover two.

Brunel and Dalby jump out and run for the pit.

Pugh is lying exactly as we last saw him. Harrington is slumped against a rock at the edge of the pit, WEEPING.

BRUNEL
Oh my God.

DALBY
(to Harrington)
Have you been down to him? Why aren't you down there!?

HARRINGTON
He's gone.

She explodes into action. Grabs the rope to climb down.

BRUNEL
No, Dalby ...

DALBY
He could still be alive.

BRUNEL
It's been fifteen minutes. His visor's cracked open.

DALBY
People are pulled from frozen lakes and recover. Maybe he --

She SLIPS on the edge and nearly falls -- SCRAPING her suit on the razor-sharp rocks. Brunel grabs her.

BRUNEL
You're gonna rip your suit or break your neck. I'm not risking another life so stand down!

DALBY
(sobbing)
I haven't pronounced it yet.

BRUNEL
I'm pronouncing it. He's dead!

Dalby PUNCHES him. BATTERS him with her fists in a silent scream of anguish and denial, trying to break his grip ...

... until she sags to her knees, spent.

For a few moments, as the tragedy fully sinks in, the three of them remain still and silent. Then:

HARRINGTON
He said he'd found something. Just before the cave-in.

BRUNEL
Found what?

Harrington shakes his head, numb.

Brunel walks around the dust-shrouded perimeter -- looking for Pugh's elusive discovery -- but a chunk of the rim BREAKS loose and CLATTERS down into the pit.

He steps way back from the edge, his earlier suspicions about the danger confirmed.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Nobody's going near there until we've spoken to mission control.

DALBY
We can't just leave him. It's not ... not decent.

HARRINGTON
I'll stay with him.

DALBY
No. I need to do it.

Brunel seems about to argue -- but her eyes warn him off.

BRUNEL
You don't try to go down there. You understand?

DALBY
(nodding, more composed)
Fifteen minute delay to get a return message from Earth, load up the lifting gear, you'll be back inside an hour. Right?

BRUNEL
At the most.

He turns for the Rover, Harrington following, still dazed.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
(into helmet radio)
Base, this is Brunel. Send to mission control.
(heavy)
We've got a confirmed fatality.

CUT TO:

33 INT. BASE - UTILITY ROOM & CONTROL ROOM. DUSK 33

A grim Brunel and Harrington enter via the airlock, taking off their helmets.

The others are waiting for them, shattered by the news. They follow as Brunel walks wearily through to the control room.

LANE
We're going straight back out, right? Get the body.

BRUNEL
See what mission control say first.

VINCENT
We're not leaving him down there.

BRUNEL
(torn)
You haven't seen that pit.

The others are about to argue when Kim steps into the fray.

KIM
Get him out, don't get him out. When are we gonna stop pussy-footing and announce the discovery?

The callous comment stops everybody dead. They look at her with stunned disbelief.

BRUNEL
You're a real piece of work.

KIM
Me!? Hey, maybe it hasn't sunk in yet, or maybe you can't handle it. But that bacteria changes everything ... science, religion, you name it. Forever.

SHAW
What about human decency?

KIM
So I'm the bad guy for staying focussed on the mission? I'm not the one who got him killed.

HARRINGTON
(anguished)
What the hell does that mean?

KIM
You were out there, you tell me.

HARRINGTON
How could I have stopped him!?

KIM
By being a man for once?

And Harrington loses it -- KICKS over a table, SMASHING everything on it. Then STORMS out.

KIM (CONT'D)
See, he's falling apart.
(looks at Brunel)
Like everything else around here.

VINCENT
For Christ's sake, Kim, give it a rest.

KIM
Tell me you don't know what I'm talking about.

The knife-edge tension is interrupted as the sky-link monitor BLEEPS, announcing an imminent communication.

A final glare of mutual recrimination, then they gather around the monitor as it flashes a ten-second countdown.

A FLIGHT DIRECTOR appears on-screen, sombre-faced.

FLIGHT DIRECTOR
Tantalus base from mission control, responding your priority code-thirteen.
(then, more personal)
What can we say, guys? We're all in deep shock. Pugh's family have been informed. Brunel, we copy your safety concerns, but it's a go for retrieving the body. Use all caution, protocols for storage to follow. Horrible way to end the mission, guys, but we're behind you a hundred percent. More soon. Fifteen thirty-six, message ends.

They absorb the news for a moment, grim and silent.

Harrington reappears. Grabs a pack of cigarettes from his console and lights up, silently daring anyone to complain.

Finally:

BRUNEL
You heard him. Pack the heavy-duty suits and lifting gear.
(pause)
We get Pugh's body then announce his discovery. As a tribute.

The final comment subtly smacks Kim into line, then the group breaks up. Shaw hangs back for a quiet word.

SHAW
You okay?

Brunel's expression says he's not. Shaw thinks for a second, formulating a response.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Y'know, nobody's ever done what we've done. The psychological pressures alone, it's incredible no-one's had a breakdown. And the hostility of the environment out there, a miracle an accident didn't happen sooner.

BRUNEL
I'm still the one who let them go out.

SHAW
What counts is how you deal with a crisis, not how you got into it.

Brunel looks at him -- and we see now how much he relies on Shaw for guidance.

Finally he smiles -- forcibly banishing his doubts.

BRUNEL
(rising, decisive)
Not fair on Harrington to take him along. He can stay and watch the store with Kim.

Shaw nods an 'attaboy' at Brunel.

CUT TO:

34 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 34

Dalby is seated in the Rover, eyes wet, watching through the windscreen as the strangely blue-tinted twilight fades to night.

Then, she looks over at the black maw of the pit ...

CUT TO:

35 EXT. SITE 9. NIGHT 35

Helmeted-up, heavy-duty torch in hand, Dalby climbs down from the back of the Rover.

Only now does it hit home how utterly alone she is out here.

She hesitates, as if briefly having second thoughts. Then, irresistibly drawn, she heads over to the pit.

She stops, uncomfortably close to the edge. Shines the torch down into the darkness.

Pugh's corpse lies as it was left -- but his face, exposed behind the cracked visor, is rapidly becoming freeze-dried.

She gazes at the body for a moment, anguished, then begins to shift the torch beam away ...

Pugh's arm seems to twitch.

She snaps the torch-beam back quickly.

Jesus, did she really see that!? Or was it merely the optical-illusion of a shifting shadow?

She stares at it. Hard. Willing it to move again.

Nothing.

Glances quickly at the rope that still hangs down into the pit. Tempted to go down. Then back again at the body.

But there's no movement.

Finally, she lets out her breath, realising she'd been holding it. Chides herself -- 'Seeing things.'

Then the oppressive darkness once again gets to her.

She turns to head back to the Rover, unintentionally kicking up a patch of loose dust and shale at her feet --

-- uncovering something that instantly grabs her attention.

Fossilised bacterial colonies.

Stunningly preserved in the rock -- circular plumes of fractal growth, much like bacterial cultures on a petri-dish, but the size of dinner plates.

She crouches, awed. SWEEPS more dust aside, uncovering tendrils of growth that join with other colonies nearby.

DALBY
(into radio)
Base, I've found what Pugh discovered before the cave-in.

KIM
(over radio)
Dalby, you're breaking up.

Dalby tries to clear the interference via the control panel on her wrist, but then shakes her head, impatient.

DALBY
I'll use the Rover transmitter, stand by.

She climbs to her feet and hurries back towards the Rover.

Meanwhile, down in the pit, the ambient glow from her retreating torch casts shifting, darkening shadows which play around Pugh's corpse, seeming almost to animate it ...

... and we hold on it with dreadful, growing expectation...

CUT TO:

36 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 36

Outside the windscreen, all is now pitch-black.

Dalby tosses her helmet aside and climbs into the driver's seat. Powers up the radio.

DALBY
(into radio)
Base, I've found fossilised bacterial colonies. Huge organic growths. They're incredible.

BRUNEL
(cutting in, over radio)
Dalby, this is Rover one, we're just setting off to come back to you. Where are these things?

DALBY
At the edge of the pit. There can't be any doubt left now. There was life here.

A faint SCRAPING sound from somewhere, making Dalby pause.

She cocks her head, puzzled. Did it come from outside? She SWITCHES on the Rover headlights. Peers outside.

Nothing to be seen.

But then the Rover SHIFTS fractionally on it's suspension -- and the outer airlock door closes with a CLUNK.

Dalby registers confused surprise.

DALBY (CONT'D)
Who's here, sir? Has somebody come ahead of you?

BRUNEL
Negative. Everybody's with me or at base.

Holy shit!

Dalby looks as if she's been doused with ice-cold water.

She begins to tremble uncontrollably -- staring at the gauge of the airlock as it climbs slowly towards green.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Dalby, what is it?

She's reeling with disbelief -- it's simply not possible that someone is in the airlock.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Dalby!

DALBY
(choked)
Somebody's coming in ...

She stares transfixed at the airlock as the gauge swings into green -- full pressure.

The door-seal cracks with a HISS. Begins to open.

CLOSE ON DALBY: Her face a mask of terror ...

CUT TO:

37 INT. ROVER 1. NIGHT 37

Brunel is driving, steering along the extinct shoreline by the beams of the headlights.

Lane and Shaw watch pensively as Vincent, on the radio in the co-driver's seat, switches through the frequencies.

VINCENT
Dalby, respond. Come in, please.
(giving up)
No reply on any band.

BRUNEL
We've had static from Site Nine all day. Radio could be down.

SHAW
Doesn't explain her last message.

Brunel shakes his head, unsure what to say. And as he steers around the familiar outcrop of rock, we see ...

SITE 9

Dalby's Rover is parked where it was left, headlights still burning -- but the rear airlock door is open.

And no sign of life.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. SITE 9. NIGHT 38

The four of them climb out of the Rover, torches blazing.

BRUNEL
Shaw, Vincent, Rover two. We'll check the storm shelter.

They split up, Brunel and Lane checking the storm-shelter. Nobody inside. They move on, approaching the pit.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
If Dalby went down there after I told her not to ...

They shine the torches down into the pit.

Their faces register shock and astonishment -- and they remain speechless as Vincent and Shaw rejoin them.

SHAW
Nothing in Rover two. Looks like --
(sees the pit, stunned)
Where's the body?

Only now do we see into the pit.

The body has gone.

Brunel shakes his head, still trying to make sense of it. He paces -- then returns to look again into the pit.

BRUNEL
Dalby ... said something about being frozen and revived ...

VINCENT
What does that mean?

BRUNEL
No way she hauled his body out of there alone. He's alive.

The others look at him, incredulous.

LANE
You said his helmet was cracked. How could he --

BRUNEL
I don't know! Maybe his suit retained air ...

LANE
And what? He and Dalby just walked away hand-in-hand?

Brunel ignores the comment, but it's given him an idea. He begins searching the ground with his torch.

The red Martian dust has been trampled by numerous tracks between Dalby's Rover and the pit ...

... but from the back of the Rover, two distinct sets of footprints lead through virgin dust, away from the site.

VINCENT
Christ, you're right. He's alive.

BRUNEL
Disorientated, maybe. Wandered away, and Dalby went after him.
(to Shaw and Lane)
You two stay here in case they circle back. And tell base to get ready for a patient.

Brunel and Vincent hurry away, following the tracks, leaving Lane and Shaw behind.

Shaw walks back to the pit, increasingly troubled.

SHAW
What the hell's going on, Lane?

LANE
You're asking me? Now I'm worried.

She joins him and gazes into the empty pit. Then, as an after-thought, searches the edge with her torch. Spots the weird fossilised growths.

LANE (CONT'D)
Dalby's fossils.

Shaw is visibly troubled by the fossils. But Lane crouches, fascinated.

LANE (CONT'D)
I hate to say it, but Kim was right. We haven't even begun to appreciate what this'll mean.

Shaw remains strangely silent so Lane looks at him. His face betrays fearful bewilderment -- as if all his prior certainties are being stripped away.

He turns towards the Rover, avoiding her gaze.

SHAW
I'll call the news in to base.

Elsewhere, at a

ROCK OUTCROP NEAR SITE 9

Vincent and Brunel continue to follow the footprints -- but they lose the tracks on harder ground.

BRUNEL
See if you can pick up the tracks that way. I'll go around here.

VINCENT
Is that a good idea?

BRUNEL
Probably not. But Pugh could be in a critical condition.

Vincent reluctantly sees the point. They split up.

VINCENT

skirts the rocky outcrop, looking for tracks.

Picks up the footprints again in a sandy depression. Turns around to look for Brunel -- but he's already gone.

VINCENT
Brunel?

A CRACKLE of static, but no response.

So Vincent goes on, tracing the tracks with his torch ...

... until they vanish into a dark cleft which splits the tall outcrop of rock.

Vincent pauses. Then pensively heads into the cleft.

It's like entering a narrow, dark, winding passageway -- many hidden turns which may hide someone waiting ...

... along with a suffocating sense of claustrophobia.

Vincent's okay until he reaches a spot where he has to squeeze through a tight gap.

And out of nowhere, he begins hyperventilating -- exactly as he did in the airlock during the storm.

He backs up, chest heaving, BREATHING hard.
Can't seem to get enough oxygen.

He's willing himself to go but can't seem to do it. Closes his eyes for a few moments, trying to get a grip.

Opens his eyes again and visibly jumps -- because Brunel is now standing next to him ...

... and he's witnessed Vincent's panic-attack.

BRUNEL
What's the matter?

VINCENT
I ... I just need a minute.

Brunel eyes him curiously. Gestures for him to go back. Visibly ashamed at his loss of control, Vincent does so.

BRUNEL

then squeezes through the narrow gap and heads onwards along the passageway, alone.

But before he's gone far, he too appears unsettled -- his imagination working on his nerves.

He turns a corner -- and in the rock wall to the left is a gaping black crevice. A perfect ambush.

He's reluctant to pass it.

BRUNEL
Dalby, are you there?

No answer.

Brunel gathers himself ... and darts forwards, shining the torch into the crevice as he hurries past.

Relieved when nothing looms out of the darkness, he hurries onwards, rebuking himself for his fear.

Suddenly, he's at the other side of the rock outcrop, and a cratered, boulder-strewn plain stretches out before him.

The twin set of footprints track away into the distance.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. ROCK OUTCROP NEAR SITE 9. NIGHT 39

Vincent is waiting at the entrance to the cleft as Brunel reappears. He opens his mouth to explain himself but Brunel speaks first, more concerned with other things.

BRUNEL
They're long gone. Across the outflow from the rift-valley.

VINCENT
How can Pugh walk so far? And where the hell are they going?

BRUNEL
(shaking head)
We drive around it to avoid the boulders - but on foot, it's the quickest way back to base.

On their joint unease and confusion

CUT TO:

40 INT. BASE - MEDICAL UNIT. NIGHT 40

A small emergency surgery. Kim and Harrington quickly ready the equipment -- oxygen, drip, thermal blanket, etc -- Harrington visibly overjoyed, Kim soberly efficient.

KIM
You realise, at best, Pugh'll be in a bad way. Severe frostbite, oxygen deprivation ...

Harrington glares at her, determined not to let her puncture his euphoria. Kim, unusually, gets the message.

KIM (CONT'D)
But, I guess, if he's on his feet...
(then, awkward)
And about what I said earlier ...

HARRINGTON
You can be a bitch. Is that the gist of it?

KIM
Not quite in so many words.

Nevertheless, the ice is broken -- and Kim almost manages a rueful smile.

Suddenly, Harrington cocks his ear, straining to listen. There's a faint PINGING sound, coming from another room.

HARRINGTON
The radar.

CUT TO:

41 INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM. NIGHT 41

Harrington and Kim enter and approach the control desk.

They look at the screen, which intermittently registers a tiny, glowing double-blob as the radar sweeps in a circle.

HARRINGTON
Barely registering above the terrain. About fifty metres out.

KIM
It's got to be Pugh and Dalby. But what the hell ...?

HARRINGTON
Who cares? They're okay, that's all that counts.

KIM
They walked all the way back here!? That's insane.
(into radio)
Dalby from base, come in.

Nothing. She moves instead to the slit-window. Looks out.

HARRINGTON
You won't see them. They're coming around the back.

KIM
Why don't they answer?

Troubled, she heads out into the

CORE

following the circular corridor, illuminated only by energy-saving night-lights. Walks past the lab, around to the

COMMUNAL ROOM

where she heads over to another slit-window. Peers out.

KIM'S POV

of the dark plain outside the window.

Two faint, moonlight shadows -- cast by unseen, walking figures -- are shifting out of sight at the edge of her field of vision.

BACK TO SCENE

as Kim pushes away from the window, frustrated she couldn't see them but sensing that something is very wrong.

She presses an intercom button.

KIM (CONT'D)
Harrington, I'm worried about their mental status. Lock the doors until we establish comms.

HARRINGTON
(over intercom)
Wha--? Are you crazy?

KIM
They're not talking, they're not acting rationally ... Nothing about this is right.

Meanwhile, back in the

CONTROL ROOM

Harrington looks again at the radar, which shows the two blobs have now reached the dead centre of the screen.

They're right outside the door.

KIM (CONT'D)
(over intercom)
Did you hear me? Lock the doors.

Conflicted, Harrington's finger hovers over the 'LOCKOUT' button on the control panel ...

... but he hesitates a second too long.

The airlock 'IN USE' light suddenly glows, and he hears the faint, muffled HISS of the outer door opening. Then the CLUNK as it shuts.

Off the hook, he hurries out into the

CORE

bumping into Kim as he does so.

HARRINGTON
Too late. They're in.

He hurries on, into the Utility Room, eager to see Pugh.

But Kim hangs back, gripped by an inexplicable anxiety ...

... so she doesn't see -- only HEARS -- as the inner airlock door HISSES open in the utility room.

Only HEARS Harrington's shocked reaction.

HARRINGTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Oh, Christ ... !

And only now does she hurry forward to the door of the

UTILITY ROOM

and looks in on a scene which numbs her to the bone.

In the gloom of the night-lights, Pugh and Dalby are coldly advancing towards Harrington.

Pugh's helmet is off.
His face, a mask of dried, dead flesh.
His eyes clouded.
A claw-hammer in his hand.

Dalby, the same dead, clouded eyes.
In her hand, a scalpel from her medical kit.

She deliberately pushes the blade into her arm as she approaches, then withdraws it, contaminated.

Harrington SCREAMS.
Tries to back away but TRIPS.

Pugh SMASHES him with the hammer and Dalby PLUNGES the scalpel into his chest.

STAYING ON KIM

as she runs for her life. STUMBLES blindly back into the control room and races for the desk.

SLAMS her hand on the radio button.

KIM
(a yell)
Mayday, Mayday ...!

CUT TO:

42 INT. ROVER 1. NIGHT 42

Vincent is driving, Brunel in the co-driver's seat, as Kim's message BLASTS over the radio.

KIM
(over radio)
... under attack, Christ almightly, get back here --

A SCREAM, a WRENCHING SOUND -- and the channel goes dead.

BRUNEL
(into headset)
Kim? Harrington!?

There's no response -- and Brunel loses it, panic-stricken.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
What the fuck is going on!?

Vincent ACCELERATES to full speed, ashen-faced. Meanwhile, Lane's worried voice comes over the radio.

LANE
Rover one from Rover two. Did you copy that last message?

Brunel quickly pulls himself together. Glances at Vincent. It's his turn, now, to feel ashamed at his loss of control.

BRUNEL
Stay off the air in case they try again, and follow us in.

CUT TO:

43 EXT. BASE. NIGHT 43

Headlights blazing, the two Rovers sweep around the side of the dome and SKID to halt near the main airlock. Brunel, Vincent, Lane and Shaw jump out.

SHAW
Pugh must be brain damaged ... Hypoxia, violent seizures ...

BRUNEL
You and Lane, check the windows. Radio if you see anything.

Shaw throws Brunel a pensive look -- but Brunel's face says, 'No more self-doubt. I'm on it.'

Then Shaw and Lane depart -- skirting the dome's perimeter, peeping in through the widely-spaced slit-windows.

Brunel doesn't wait. He opens the outer airlock door.

Vincent tries to step in with him -- but Brunel blocks him.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Better stay here.

Vincent looks at him, nonplussed -- but then he realises Brunel hasn't forgotten his earlier wobble.

VINCENT
I'm fine. I'm with you.

BRUNEL
No point both of us walking into an ambush.

VINCENT
Then I'll give it a minute and follow behind.

BRUNEL
No. If you're coming in, I can't get back out. Stay here unless I call you - that's an order.

Brunel steps inside -- leaving a humiliated Vincent outside the airlock, alone in the still, silent darkness ...

CUT TO:

44 INT. BASE - AIRLOCK. NIGHT 44

Brunel's face betrays his struggle between fear and duty as he peers through the reinforced-glass porthole into the utility room beyond. Sees nothing ...

... but he jumps as Lane's voice CRACKLES over the radio.

LANE
Skipper, can't see anything. The lab doesn't have windows, though.

BRUNEL
Okay, radio silence.

The airlock cycle complete, the gauge turns green. Bracing himself, he OPENS the door. Steps through into the

UTILITY ROOM

Takes off his helmet so he can listen. Then moves on. He's barely gone three paces before he spots something.

Harrington's body -- slumped behind a locker.

With a GASP of anguish Brunel drops to his knees. Checks Harrington's blown, clouded pupils. Feels for a pulse.

But it's clear there's no hope. Harrington is dead.

Before Brunel can react further he hears a muffled CRASH from somewhere inside the base, followed by a CRY.

Kim.

He bursts into action. RUNS to help.

CUT TO:

45 INT. BASE - LABORATORY. NIGHT 45

Equipment SMASHES as Kim vaults over a work bench -- barely escaping a slash from Dalby's scalpel.

Dalby and Pugh are stalking her amongst the work benches -- cold and calculating -- trying to corner her for the kill.

Pugh tries to cut Kim off as Dalby closes from the rear -- but she swings the heavy articulated arm of an x-ray scanner. BASHES him aside.

Sees an opening. Races for the door with lithe, desperate speed with Dalby on her heels.

Darts through the bulk-head door into the

CORE

and SLAMS the door shut -- trapping Dalby's fingers.

Dalby feels no pain. Tries to pull the door open again.

But Kim repeatedly YANKS on the door, SMASHING Dalby's fingers. Manages to close it.

Holds onto the door-lever for dear life as Dalby and Pugh BATTER it from the other side.

Brunel appears in the nick of time.

KIM
Get something to brace this!

BRUNEL
Holy God, what the ...?

But Brunel doesn't need any further explanations. He can see Pugh and Dalby for himself as they begin HAMMERING at the reinforced-glass panel in the door.

He snatches up a nylon equipment harness from nearby. Ties the door's handle in place.

KIM
Won't hold for long. We need to get the hell out.

BRUNEL
We can't abandon the base. How would we --

Glass SPRAYS everywhere as Pugh's hammer comes through it, followed by his groping arm.

No more argument -- they run like hell.

Around the circular central corridor, back to the

UTILITY ROOM

where Harrington's body lies just as it was left -- an unsettling reminder of their dire predicament.

Kim snatches an environment suit off the rack -- Brunel reaching over Harrington's body to grab a spare helmet ...

... and Harrington's body jolts in a brief, galvanic spasm -- his eyes snapping open.

With a reflexive CRY of horror Brunel scrambles backwards.

The next second he and Kim hear the CRASH of the lab door being broken open.

Kim tries to scramble into the suit -- but there's no time.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Emergency airlock!

Brunel grabs Kim and they run.

They race around the central corridor. Past the sleeping quarters and toilets. Into the room housing the

EMERGENCY AIRLOCK

It's little bigger than a broom-closet. Emergency suits on a rack -- and in the outer wall at knee-height, the small crawl-way hatch of the emergency escape.

Only big enough for one at a time.

Brunel jams his shoulder against the door, holding the handle closed, as Kim struggles quickly into the suit.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Go. I'll follow you.

KIM
How will you -- ?

BRUNEL
Go! Leave a helmet inside for me, and cycle the pressure when you get out.

Kim grabs a spare helmet, POPS the hatch and crawls in. SLAMS it behind her ...

... just as Dalby begins SHOULDERING at the room door, catching Brunel off-guard.

The door is FORCED part-way open -- but Brunel manages to SLAM it closed again.

He braces the door handle, terror etched on his face.

Through the glass panel, Dalby's dead face glares back at him with clinical determination as she HEAVES at the door.

Then a moment later, behind her, Pugh appears -- carrying his blood-stained hammer.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Oh, shit! Move it, Kim!

CUT TO:

46 EXT. BASE. NIGHT 46

Kim scrambles out of the coffin-like airlock.

SLAMS the outer hatch shut behind her. PUNCHES the button to re-cycle the air.

KIM
(into radio)
Vincent, Lane, anyone. I'm at the emergency exit. Need help.

VINCENT
(over radio)
Kim? Stay there, we're coming.

Kim crouches by the hatch porthole, peering back inside.

CUT TO:

47 INT. BASE - EMERGENCY AIRLOCK. NIGHT 47

Brunel is losing the battle -- straining to hold the door handle closed under the combined ASSAULT.

Glass CRACKS but holds as Pugh HAMMERS at it.

Brunel glances behind. Sees the airlock gauge turn green.

Three urgent deep BREATHS, summoning courage ... then he abandons the door and leaps for the airlock.

HITS the button.
POPS open the hatch.

Behind him, the door CRASHES open.

Scrambles through the hatch.
Pulls it closed --

-- but not quick enough. The hatch is SNATCHED back open.

And Brunel is dragged out by his legs, SCREAMING.

Pugh's bloody claw-hammer <u>HACKS</u> down into Brunel's thigh.

He ROARS in agony.
Spins onto his back.
KICKS Pugh and Dalby backwards with all his might.

SCRAMBLES back into the airlock as they come at him again -- and SLAMS the hatch closed just in time.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. BASE. NIGHT 48

Kim peers through the porthole at the injured Brunel as the small airlock quickly cycles.

Vincent, Lane and Shaw come RUNNING to help -- just as the hatch POPS open and Brunel SPILLS out.

Several things happen at once:

Kim SMASHES the airlock control panel.
RIPS out the circuits, disabling it.

Blocks Pugh and Dalby from getting out.

Meanwhile, the torn wound on Brunel's thigh has fast begun VENTING air and evaporating blood.

BRUNEL
Suit ... gotta seal it ...

VINCENT
(taking it all in)
Christ, what went on in there?

Brunel is SCRABBLING to pull an emergency patch from a utility pocket on his suit. Vincent grabs it for him.

RIPS it open and sticks it, like a giant plaster, over the tear in Brunel's suit. Seals the air leak.

Simultaneously Lane strips an equipment tether from her suit and uses it as a tourniquet on his thigh.

BRUNEL
(in pain, to Vincent)
Should've let you go in with me.

Vincent looks at him, vindicated but guilt-ridden never-theless -- then Kim abruptly jumps up.

KIM
(running off)
Shit, main airlock! Got to lock them in!

BRUNEL
Vincent, go. Help her.

VINCENT
(to Shaw and Lane)
Can you manage him?

They nod -- begin helping Brunel to his feet as Vincent RUNS after Kim.

He quickly skirts the perimeter of the base to the main airlock -- where he finds Kim frantically BASHING at the control panel with her elbow, trying to smash it.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Whoa, easy!

Vincent pulls open the outer airlock door.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Inner door's disabled, alright? Now what the hell happened in there?

KIM
Pugh and Dalby ... Killed Harrington ...

VINCENT
Pugh and Dalby!?

But he next moment, her knees buckle as the adrenaline fuelled stress-reaction suddenly becomes too much.

Vincent supports her as she takes a moment to recover -- then Shaw and Lane appear, helping the limping Brunel.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
(to Kim)
Okay, slow and easy. What're we dealing with?

She shakes her head, as if unable to believe it herself.

KIM
They killed Harrington ... but he ... he wasn't dead ...

SHAW
She's not making sense.

BRUNEL
It's true. Harrington was stone dead. But then he came back ...

Shaw, Lane and Vincent exchange looks of utter disbelief -- but just then, Pugh begins POUNDING on the airlock door.

They JUMP, startled. Then, warily, Vincent and Lane step inside the airlock. Peek through the inner porthole.

THEIR POV

Pugh -- waxen-faced and spattered with Brunel's blood -- is HAMMERING at the porthole, determined to get through.

Dalby is standing behind him, waiting expectantly.

But Pugh stops when he realises it's no go -- and both he and Dalby return Vincent and Lane's horrified gaze with a look of cold, murderous inhumanity.

LANE
Jesus, what's happened to them!?

KIM
(from outside)
You still don't get it, do you. They're dead!

BACK TO SCENE

as Vincent and Lane stumble back outside, reeling.

LANE
Crazy or dead, if they get through that door ...

VINCENT
Impregnable. No way.

SHAW
Look, we've got two people in a pathological frenzy. We need to get back in and --

BRUNEL
No!

Brunel is fighting through his pain, taking charge again.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
We're not risking any more lives.
(pause)
Help me to Site Two. We'll hole up, figure out what to do next.

VINCENT
No high-gain transmitter in there.

BRUNEL
There's ways around that. Only priority is that the danger stays contained inside the base.

KIM
(to Vincent)
You sure they have no other way out?

VINCENT
Windows are reinforced and the walls are a foot-thick, filled with rigid foam. You'd have to --

He trails off, an ominous thought dawning.

LANE
What is it?

Vincent turns to the taut skin of the dome wall. Rests his helmet against the plastic, listening.

There's a muffled WHINE.

VINCENT
Power saw. They're cutting through.

He backs away, anxious. The others likewise.

SHAW
The decompression'll kill them.

KIM
It won't.

WHOOSHING sound as a CUT appears in the skin of the dome. Air begins VENTING, condensing in the sub-zero atmosphere.

SHAW
Breached it. Suicide.

But within moments, further cuts appear in the wall as the long, powered blade RIPS through the foam and plastic --

-- then the interior pressure PUNCHES out a gaping hole.

A second of tense anticipation ...

Then Pugh, helmet-less, begins squeezing through the gap.

Shaw is rooted to the spot, utterly aghast. The others back away in horror, equally appalled and repulsed.

What they're witnessing is impossible, yet it's happening -- and their minds can barely cope.

LANE
Get to the Rovers.

KIM
Take too long to get through the airlocks. They'd be all over us.

VINCENT
Then run!

Dragging Brunel, Kim, Vincent and Lane turn and run -- out across the plain towards Site Two, a third of a mile away.

LANE
Shaw, move it!

Shaw finally snaps out of his paralysis. Turns and runs.

Behind them, Pugh crawls from the hole and drops to the ground. Climbs to his feet as Dalby begins squeezing through the ragged gap behind him, also without helmet.

KIM, LANE, BRUNEL, VINCENT & SHAW

have a head start on the undead, but they're struggling against the weight and restrictions of their suits -- plus the massive liability of the injured Brunel.

Five hundred metres ahead, they can see the distant white airlock protruding from the artificial hill at Site Two.

They keep glancing back. The dome is receding behind them, but they can still see what's happening.

Dalby is now through the gap. The two undead begin walking in purposeful pursuit ...

... but then they stop -- as if realising something -- and turn towards the Rovers.

The others register this -- and panic.

LANE (CONT'D)
Faster!

BRUNEL
Take them a minute to get through the airlocks ... then power up...

They're already GASPING from the exertion. Vincent looks back. The undead are inside the Rovers.

He runs on further, then glances back again.

One of the Rovers is STIRRING into life.

It moves forwards -- then stops, as if the driver is struggling with the controls -- then moves forwards again.

It's facing the wrong way, so it begins a wide turn. The second Rover starts after it.

VINCENT
They're coming.

Then the vehicles lock on target and aim towards them.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. SITE 2. NIGHT 49

The airlock at site 2 is now only a hundred metres away.

However, the fugitives are staggering, PANTING with each ragged breath. Behind them, the Rovers draw ever closer.

Fifty metres to go.

Vincent looks back. The Rovers are almost on them -- aiming to run them down.

BRUNEL
Watch it!

They scatter aside as the first Rover -- limited by safety-design in its turning capacity -- RACES through them ...

... then again as the second one bears down -- missing them by inches before continuing onwards to Site 2.

Rover one SKIDS to a halt close to the airlock, Rover two nearby.

Rover two's airlock HISSES as the air inside cycles. Within moments, the door will open.

It's a race against time -- to get inside Site Two before Pugh and Dalby spill out of the Rovers to intercept them.

Fifteen metres to go and the limping Brunel trips. FALLS flat-out with a CRY of agony.

Vincent and Kim haul him back to his feet as Vincent YELLS at Lane and Shaw to keep going.

VINCENT
Go! Get the door open!

Shaw and Lane reach the Site 2 airlock.
HIT the button to open the door.
Jump inside and hold it open for the others.

Vincent and Kim STAGGER towards them with Brunel.

But with only metres to go, Rover two's door POPS open. Pugh JUMPS down, moving to block the path to the airlock.

No sign of Dalby from the other Rover, but absolutely no time for them to think why.

Vincent doesn't hesitate.
Feints one way --
-- then SHOULDER-BARGES straight into Pugh.

Takes a painful glancing blow from the hammer but KNOCKS Pugh flying, allowing Kim and Brunel to get past ...

... only for them to run straight into a trap.

Rover one <u>REVERSES</u> suddenly -- CRASHING straight into Brunel and Kim.

Kim jumps aside, barely harmed, but Brunel is unable to move quick enough. Takes the full-on, blunt-trauma impact.

Goes down, pole-axed.

CRIES of anguish as Vincent and Kim grab Brunel's arms and literally DRAG him, flat-out.

Rover one drives forwards then immediately POWERS backwards again, trying to run them all down now.

Misses them by inches as they TUMBLE into the airlock --

-- the rear of the Rover CRUNCHING impotently into the protruding meteorite-shield overhanging the airlock door.

CUT TO:

50 INT. SITE 2 - AIRLOCK. NIGHT 50

The others gather around Brunel as the air CYCLES.

LANE
Skipper. Skipper! Focus and stay awake, alright?

BRUNEL
(in shock)
Okay ... I'm okay ...

But he's clearly far from okay -- pasty-faced and sweating, GASPING, his left arm and rib-cage smashed and paralysed.

VINCENT
(watching the gauge)
Nearly through. Just hold on.

CUT TO:

51 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME. DAY 51

The inner door HISSES open and as Kim POWERS UP the lights, the others lift Brunel inside.

Settle him against the wall and pull off his helmet as Kim RUNS for the control room.

Lane takes charge of Brunel, Shaw helping inefficiently, still too shocked and numb to do much.

LANE
(calling after Kim)
Medical kit, whatever you can find.

BRUNEL
Couldn't feel anything ... but
now it's starting to hurt.

Lane checks Brunel's pulse, then begins feeling his ribs.

Brunel SCREAMS in agony.

The others exchange frightened, ominous looks. Kim RUNS back with the first-aid kit and BREAKS it open.

Lane pulls out a syringe. Gives a shot of painkiller.

Next, heavy-duty scissors. Partially unzips Brunel's suit, CUTS open the rest. Brunel YELLS again, but more muted.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Jesus, Lane!

LANE
Got to see what ...

VINCENT
You're okay, skipper. Hang on.
(to Lane)
You can fix him, right?

Lane peels back the suit.
Brunel's white undershirt is red with blood.
Cuts open the shirt and exposes Brunel's caved-in ribs.

Flail-chest, pneumothorax, Christ knows what else inside.
Blood FROTHS with each ragged BREATH from his torn rib-cage.

Lane sits back, stunned.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
There's more medical supplies in
the storage crates.

Kim RUNS off again to begin searching -- but Lane's face tells Vincent it's no go. Brunel clocks this also.

BRUNEL
Hey, I know that look, you don't
have to ...

He trails off. The others are numb, traumatised.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Doesn't feel right inside.
Nothing feels right.

LANE
(anguished)
Skipper ...

Brunel is GRIPPED by pain. Takes a few moments to recover.

BRUNEL
Christ, what a mess. Six months, we were cruising it. And now ...
(puzzled frown)
Got a photo in my pocket. The kids. Get it, will you.

Vincent begins rifling through his pockets.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
What's Kate gonna tell them?
(pause)
Funny. I can see them but ... it's like they belong to someone else ... not mine anymore. Why is that?

VINCENT
(increasingly desperate)
Which pocket, skipper?

BRUNEL
You'll tell them I was thinking of them. You'll do that.

LANE
Count on it.

Silent tears are dripping from Lane's eyes. Even Kim has given up the search. She comes back to watch, shaken.

BRUNEL
We saw things nobody else has ever seen. Can't take that away, can they.

Then Brunel looks down at his bloody chest, confused.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
Is that really me? Feels like...
(then, to Vincent)
Hey, where's my photo?

Vincent looks at Lane in despair -- the photo's not there.

But a moment later it's forgotten. Brunel gazes at each of the others in turn, as if seeing them for the first time.

His eyes lose focus, registering fear and confusion.

Doesn't know where he is, what the hell he's doing here.

Then suspicion takes over ...

Followed by paranoia.

LAUNCHES himself upwards, ROARING incoherently, his crippled body falling to one side before he makes it to his feet.

Shocks everyone out of their grief.

They all PILE onto him, holding him down as he THRASHES violently, out of control.

He glares at each of them murderously, RAGING ...

... then the next moment he's SOBBING.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
You're hurting, don't don't don't ... I'm sorry ... I'm okay ...
(growing more composed)
Alright. I can take charge again. Mission's not done yet. Just give me a few ...

He's calming down and they slowly relax their grip, not wanting to hurt him.

For a moment he's gripped by utter clarity -- a horrible dawning realisation of what's really happening to him.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
You have to help me ...

He's looking at Shaw -- but Shaw can barely help himself at the moment, torn between horror and revulsion.

And Brunel's eyes again register paranoia ... then hatred.

LUNGES FORWARDS, going for Shaw's throat with his hands.

KICKS wildly as Vincent, Lane and Shaw hold him down again while Kim hurries to grab some rope.

Comes back a few moments later and begins tying him up.

LANE
Ah, no way, you can't ...

KIM
We have to!

BRUNEL
No no no no no ...

Kim and Vincent hog-tie him as he continues FIGHTING them.

Then, his arms and legs tightly bound, they back away, wary.

Brunel strains and squirms for several long moments like a trapped animal, then he realises it's hopeless.

Relaxes, his breaths now RAGGED and intermittent -- his eyes beginning to cloud over, growing utterly cold and inhuman.

The transformation is almost complete.

His final, chilling words are almost inaudible.

BRUNEL (CONT'D)
You'll never see home.

Then he stops breathing and lies utterly still.

The moment reverberates amongst the others with silent but profound impact: each of them shaken to the core by the roller-coaster display they've just witnessed.

Vincent, in particular, has clearly been hit hard.

Warily, Lane steps forwards. Checks Brunel's pulse.

LANE
He's gone.

KIM
Not for long.

And as if to punctuate the blunt comment, Brunel's body twitches momentarily -- the process continuing even now.

Lane pulls away, repulsed and shattered in equal measure.

The others are still dealing with their grief but Kim is already focussing on the bigger picture.

She ensures the inner airlock door is firmly wedged open, then steps through.

KIM'S POV

By now, Dalby has emerged from the second Rover and has joined Pugh. The two of them are standing motionless outside the airlock, silhouetted in the pale moonlight.

Waiting with ominous, inhuman patience.

BACK TO SCENE

as Kim steps back out of the airlock. Vincent looks at her.

VINCENT
What are they doing out there?

KIM
Waiting ... planning ... who knows? But we need to get through to the relief ship.

VINCENT
How? We've only got ground comms.

KIM
Patch into the base transmitter. Should be a way to do it remotely.

Kim heads over to the control room and gets to work.

Lane, Vincent and Shaw meanwhile are left wondering what, if anything, to do with Brunel.

The body squirms again briefly -- chest heaving with a single, useless, autonomic BREATH ...

... then sentience slowly creeps back into Brunel's eyes.

And they lock onto Vincent with a look of cold accusation.

Vincent can't stand it any more. Fetches a tarpaulin and covers up the body.

Shaw shakes his head, still in denial.

SHAW
It can't be the way it looks. Dead people don't just ...

VINCENT
Pugh and Dalby are outside without helmets, Shaw. Are they alive?

LANE
Maybe it's the Martian atmosphere. Some kind of bizarre reaction.

VINCENT
All that matters is they're trying to kill us. Make us like them.

Kim shouts from the control room, excited.

KIM
I'm patched in!

Sudden, renewed hope floods through the group. They hurry over to join Kim inside the

CONTROL ROOM

and as they crowd around she finishes adjusting the radio.

KIM (CONT'D)
Aurora from Tantalus base. Mayday, mayday. Come in.

A second of heightened tension as they watch the dancing, up-link signal-strength graphic on the screen.

KIM (CONT'D)
Aurora from Tantalus base --

AURORA COMMANDER
Tantalus this is Aurora, copy your Mayday. Give us a sit-rep.

Utter joy and relief sweep across everyone's faces.

KIM
Aurora, Christ, you don't know how good you sound. Emergency situation. We have four confirmed --

But the signal-graphic abruptly dies on the screen.

KIM (CONT'D)
Hello? Hello, Aurora, come in.
(fiddling with controls)
No no no no ...

LANE
What's the matter with it?

KIM
It's down. We were on-line, base transmitter at full-strength, and somebody pulled the --

A terrible realisation sinks in amongst them.

VINCENT
Harrington.

On their crushed, distraught faces

CUT TO:

52 POV - BASE THROUGH BINOCULARS 52

A grainy, enlarged, night-scope image of the distant, white-domed base.

A lone, helmet-less figure -- Harrington, now fully reanimated -- climbs from the ragged hole cut through the side-wall. Begins walking straight towards us.

CUT TO:

53 INT. SITE 2 - AIRLOCK. NIGHT 53

Kim lowers the digital binoculars from the airlock porthole. Exchanges a look with the others -- confirmation that their situation just got a whole lot worse.

KIM
Two of them outside was bad enough. But in a few minutes ...

LANE
(to Vincent)
We're impregnable though, right?

VINCENT
As good as. Airlock's the only way in or out.

KIM
That's exactly the problem. The relief ship's gonna land out there tomorrow. And if we don't get to it before those things do ...

SHAW
But they heard the Mayday.

KIM
Yeah, and that's all they heard. They'll be climbing over each other to get down here.

The hellish irony of the predicament sinks in.

KIM (CONT'D)
We need another way out.

CUT TO:

54 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME. NIGHT 54

Shaw is keeping watch at the airlock porthole. Meanwhile, Vincent has retrieved a tablet computer from storage and has pulled the hydroponic dome's blueprints up onto the screen.

He, Lane and Kim huddle around, studying the schematics -- focussing on a cylindrical assembly protruding from the far, rear section of the structure.

VINCENT
Only possibility is the waste gas outlet in the extraction plant. But there's no practical way.

KIM
Why not? Dismantle the filter housing you get access to the outer cover.

VINCENT
Screw around in there you risk blowing-out the whole valve. Asphyxiate the lot of us.

KIM
Not if we're careful.

VINCENT
That's right Kim, I don't know what I'm taking about. I only put this place together.

KIM
Yeah, and we're way beyond worrying about safety-specs right now. It's worth the risk.

VINCENT
Risk!? Do you realise what the pressure-differential is between inside and --

KIM
So what do we do instead, battle our way out of that airlock!?

VINCENT
Which we'll have to do anyway if your plan doesn't work.

KIM
(losing it)
At least I've got a plan. So I guess it's down to which one of us is running this show.

SHAW
(interrupting)
Something's happening!

Shaw's YELL breaks the tension. The others quickly join him in the airlock and peer through the porthole.

THEIR POV

Harrington has now joined the others, and together they're pulling tools and drilling equipment from one of the lockers at the side of the Rover.

They carry everything to the airlock door and, as the other two watch, Pugh takes up a sledge-hammer.

Begins POUNDING at the airlock hinges.

BACK TO SCENE

as they step back, shaken.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Shit!

VINCENT
He won't even make a dent. There's no way through.

KIM
What if they smash open the control panel? Mess with the wires?

VINCENT
Fail-safe will keep the door closed, no matter what.

KIM
Yeah, famous last words.

SHAW
And what if they fuck it up so the door won't open at all? What then?

KIM
(to Vincent)
Either way. You still think we don't need another way out?

Vincent surrenders with a SIGH, tired of arguing.

VINCENT
Okay, do it your way.

Kim looks at him -- taken back by his abrupt surrender.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I'm serious. You go look at the outlet, I'll find some weapons. Then we're covered both ways.

Kim simply nods, barely able to believe she's in charge.

CUT TO:

55 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME. NIGHT 55

Pugh's ominous, intermittent POUNDING reverberates in the background as Kim and Shaw pull up the floor panels between the plant-racks, using T-shaped lifting keys.

Underneath is a safety grille, covering a darkened utility basement beneath.

KIM
Unbolt these grills, we're in.

Shaw reaches for a toolbox and they get started.

VINCENT

meanwhile, is searching through a cargo container. Finds a compact box marked with a HazMat sticker. Looks inside.

It's half empty, but nestled in the foam packaging are three small metal cylinders, each with buttons and an LED display.

Lane appears, carrying a heavy plastic bottle.

LANE
Flammable chemicals from the lab. All I can find. What about you?

VINCENT
Excavation charges. But whether anything is gonna work against those things ...

LANE
If only we knew what we were dealing with.

Their attention is inevitably drawn to Brunel's body nearby -- and guilt and anguish wash over Vincent once again.

LANE (CONT'D)
(gently, re: Brunel)
It's not your fault.

VINCENT
Indirectly, it is.
(after a moment)
I ... froze. While we were looking for Dalby and Pugh. That's why he didn't want me inside the base.

LANE
(shaking head)
And everything would've been alright if you'd been in there? That's what you're saying.

Vincent says nothing. Lane tries a different tack.

LANE (CONT'D)
So you had a wobble. Big deal. You think the rest of us aren't on the verge of coming uncapped after six months? Was Pugh acting entirely rationally?

VINCENT
Hardly the same --

LANE
My God, I almost lost it before we even got here. You ever notice I didn't look out the capsule window? You lot couldn't get enough of it. The stars ... the vastness of it ...
(pause)
But it terrified me to the core. It's the abyss.

Vincent looks at her -- her words finally doing the trick. A brief moment of sharing -- and more.

VINCENT
Guess we've all got our demons.

Then the moment is broken as Pugh stops hammering.

A moment of ominous silence -- then he begins DRILLING.

The change of sound seems to penetrate though to Brunel -- and his body squirms under the tarpaulin.

Kim joins them briefly -- hands Vincent a portable radio and keeps one for herself.

KIM
We've got the floor up and we're going down. Those things outside make any progress you better yell.

Vincent nods and Kim departs -- leaving Lane still looking at Brunel's body. Thinking.

LANE
There's a microscope in the mini-lab, yes?

VINCENT
(a nod)
What're you thinking?

LANE
We want to know what's driving those things, let's see what his blood tells us.

Simultaneously, elsewhere ...

KIM AND SHAW

have lowered a ladder down into the utility basement.

Helmets, ropes and tools slung over their shoulders, torches in hand, they descend.

CUT TO:

56 INT. SITE 2 - UTILITY BASEMENT. NIGHT 56

A dark, narrow passage lined with ducts and cables, leading away into the blackness.

The place is creepy, and Shaw is clearly not happy. Even Kim pauses, having second thoughts.

But then she consults the plans on the tablet computer, confirms the route ahead, and leads the way.

CUT TO:

57 INT. SITE 2 - MINI-LAB. NIGHT 57

A cramped lab with an array of equipment. Lane prepares a slide for the microscope, watched by Vincent.

She places it under the scope and works the controls.

LANE
Catecholamine levels tell a lot about the process a person went through when they died. His lipids should also ...

She trails off, mortified.

The image has been displayed on a screen beside a blood-chemistry readout. But the analysis is not required --

-- because the blood is swarming with live, multiplying bacteria. The same ugly worm-shapes we saw earlier.

CUT TO:

58 INT. SITE 2 - UTILITY BASEMENT. NIGHT 58

Kim and Shaw SHUFFLE along a gangway, bending low under girders and cross-ducts.

They're underneath the water-extraction machinery that serves the hydroponic-dome -- pumps melting and drawing H2O from a glacier deep below ground.

They move onwards until they reach an obstacle.

KIM
Whoa.

The gangway ends in a two-metre drop, down into a foul-looking over-flow tank of unfiltered water. At the far side of the tank, the gangway continues.

A ladder leads down into the tank, but they're clearly reluctant to go down.

SHAW
Will the ladder detach?

Kim cottons-on immediately. Unhooks the top of the ladder, pulls it up, then together they manoeuvre it across the gap, resting it on the far side.

Then Kim begins gingerly crawling across it.

She makes it to the other side safely and, as Shaw crosses after her, her radio CRACKLES into life.

VINCENT
(over radio)
Kim, we've got a breakthrough. Brunel's infected with the Martian bacteria.

KIM
(stunned, into radio)
What!? But ... it's ancient history ... part of the fossil record.

VINCENT
No. Some strain of it survived. Hibernating in the ground until something came along it could infect ... use as a host.

KIM
Pugh.

VINCENT
And then the others, one by one. Spread by cross-infection.

For a moment they mull the profound implications.

KIM
A bug that reanimates dead life forms ...
(pause)
Lane, can you do anything with this? To fight them?

LANE
(dubious)
Short of messing with their blood chemistry ...

SHAW
It's a bacterial infection. What about antibiotics?

LANE
Are you serious? It can't be that simple.

KIM
Well, you've got a guinea pig back there.
(pause)
Why not use it?

And without waiting for Lane's reply, Kim heads on her way along the next section of gangway. Shaw follows.

CUT TO:

59 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME. NIGHT 59

Vincent reluctantly pulls back the tarpaulin -- and finds Brunel gazing back at him with his glazed, dead gaze.

Even though he half-expected it, he's still shaken.

Then, with gloved hands, he crouches. Forces Brunel's head to one side, exposing his neck.

LANE
Good. Hold him there.

Lane SNAPS on a pair of latex medical gloves.

Mentally girds herself. Then feels Brunel's jugular for a pulse. Shakes her head.

She leans closer, shining a torch into his eyes.

LANE (CONT'D)
No pulse, but his pupils, what I can see of them, still react to light.

VINCENT
Bacteria takes over whatever functions it needs. Movement ... vision ...

LANE
(nodding)
Chest still inflates intermittently even though he doesn't need air, so some of the movement's autonomic.

VINCENT
Unless they're making use of other trace gasses, like the ones in the Martian atmosphere.

Lane nods: 'Could be'.

Then, from a bottle, she draws into a syringe a massive dose of broad-spectrum antibiotics.

LANE
(nervous humour)
If this works, Shaw'll never let me live it down.

She looks at Vincent -- acknowledging their mutual distaste at what they're doing -- then leans over Brunel.

Brunel squirms in anticipation -- but Lane jabs the syringe into his jugular and presses the plunger. Empties it.

Then they let go and step back.

Brunel shows no reaction -- but he shifts his penetrating, unblinking gaze onto Lane for the first time.

It visibly unsettles her.

LANE (CONT'D)
He knows what we're doing. He understands.

VINCENT
Don't let that gaze get to you.

LANE
You don't suppose he ...
(pause)
What I mean is, they can plan, drive, use tools ... so the brain, the memory, still works.

VINCENT
On some basic level, I guess.

LANE
What if part of Brunel is still in there?

Vincent doesn't answer. Doesn't like to think about it.

Suddenly, Brunel tenses. Begins trembling. And for the first time since 'death' his face registers expression.

Fear.

LANE (CONT'D)
Vincent ...

VINCENT
It's a reflex. Not what you think.

But as the trembling turns to a SHUDDER, Brunel's eyes again seem to register a glimpse of humanity.

His lips move. Silently mouthing 'Help me'.

LANE
Oh my God.

VINCENT
It's a trick.

LANE
(shaking head)
If the bacteria's weakened, he could be fighting back ...

VINCENT
It's not Brunel. He's gone.

LANE
But suppose he isn't!

Brunel CONVULSES violently -- spasms THRASHING his body.

It continues for several moments -- growing progressively weaker. Until finally, he lies completely motionless.

Lane moves forwards cautiously to look.

VINCENT
Careful ...

She stoops. Checks Brunel's pupils -- stunned.

LANE
Fixed and dilated. We've done it.

They can barely believe it -- but as the body continues to remain utterly frozen they manage a half-smile of victory.

FAIL-SAFE ALARM sounds suddenly from the airlock.

A loud RING, accompanied by an aborted WHINE of lock-servos -- the gauge flashing red and green intermittently.

Vincent jumps up and runs towards it instinctively, then pulls up when the alarm falls silent.

VINCENT
Fail-safe kicking in. They tried to bypass the locking bolts, but it won't let them.

Next moment, Kim's voice comes over the portable radio.

KIM
(over radio)
What's happening back there?

VINCENT
(into radio)
Automatic alarm, don't worry about it. Listen, the antibiotic worked. Brunel's dead - really dead.

Before Kim can celebrate Vincent continues, sober.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Which is great if they'll sit still and let you inject them. But otherwise ...

CUT TO:

60 INT. SITE 2 - UTILITY BASEMENT. NIGHT 60

Kim and Shaw have paused at the far side of the water-extraction plant, Kim continuing the radio conversation.

KIM
(into radio)
Okay, so we need something like a tranquilliser gun.

VINCENT
(over radio)
And where the hell do we get that?

KIM
Then something else. There must be some way to weaponise it.

VINCENT
Can't work miracles. But leave it with us.

Kim signs off and they move onwards, finally arriving at the

WASTE GAS OUTLET

A ground-level metre-wide cylindrical assembly jutting at forty-five degrees upwards, out through the outer dome wall.

Various ducts feed into it from one side, but the other side consists of a removable panel accessing the inside.

Kim consults the blueprints one last time, briefly REVVING up a powered socket tool.

KIM
(re: plans)
Pull out the filters and safety baffles, and when the time comes, we'll leech off the air pressure and go through the outer panel.
(pause, sheepish)
But better helmet up. Just in case Vincent's right.

As they're putting on their helmets, Kim spots something on the wall of the dome, where it contacts the ground.

KIM (CONT'D)
Hey, shine some light down here.

Shaw shines the torch ...

... onto a patch of <u>bacterial growth</u> -- mould-plumes linked by creeping tendrils, exactly as we saw in Dalby's fossil.

Except this is alive, scintillating with unearthly colours.

KIM (CONT'D)
Oh ... are these the same colonies as in Dalby's fossil?

Shaw simply nods, repelled.

KIM (CONT'D)
Can't have been here when the dome went on-line. Must've been in the ground... fed off the condensation dripping from the valve.

SHAW
How could something like that have ever have evolved in the first place? On a planet without other life?

KIM
Maybe it came from somewhere else ... a meteorite maybe ...

She gazes at the beautiful colours, in awe -- then abruptly backs away. Puts on her helmet.

KIM (CONT'D)
Probably not a good idea to get that stuff in your lungs.

They exchange a look, anxious -- then get to work on the outlet panel, UNSCREWING the bolts with the power tools.

CUT TO:

61 POV - THROUGH SITE 2 AIRLOCK PORTHOLE. 61

Pugh, Dalby and Harrington have drilled open the airlock's outer control-panel and are messing with the wires inside.

CUT TO:

62 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME & AIRLOCK. NIGHT 62

Vincent backs away from the porthole, increasingly worried, and jogs back towards the

MINI-LAB

where Lane is busy at the microscope, studying another slide of Brunel's blood.

On the screen, the bacteria -- previously swarming and dividing -- is almost inactive, with only a few individual bacilli still moving sluggishly.

She glances up at Vincent as he enters.

LANE
Brunel's blood after the injection. No multiplication and motility almost zero.
(pause)
What's happening at the airlock?

VINCENT
Messing inside the control panel.
(anxious)
Look, there must be some way we can deliver that stuff from a distance. What about a spray?

LANE
You are worried they'll get through that door!

VINCENT
Let's just say I want to cover my backside. Is there?

LANE
Any injectable antibiotic can be aerosolised. But you need a mechanism - like a nebuliser.

Airlock FAIL-SAFE ALARM goes of a second time, startling them. After a moment it stops.

VINCENT
(rattled)
They're not gonna quit.

But it's suddenly given Lane an idea.

LANE
Wait a minute ... airlock. It's a got a decontamination spray. We can fill the reservoir with antibiotic.

VINCENT
You mean get those things inside and douse them. Will that work?

LANE
In theory.

She heads for the fridge containing the stored antibiotic.

CUT TO:

63 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME & AIRLOCK. NIGHT 63

Vincent has opened an access panel next to the airlock door and is screwing a pressurised reservoir bottle into place.

As he does so, Lane steps into the airlock, curious to see what's happening outside.

She peers out -- then does a double-take.

LANE
Where's Pugh?

Vincent jumps up. Joins her at the porthole.

THEIR POV

Harrington and Dalby are still pulling wires from inside the airlock control panel, trying to by-pass circuits.

Pugh is nowhere to be seen -- but a trail of footprints leads away, following the dome's perimeter, out of sight.

BACK TO SCENE

Lane and Vincent exchange a look of deep foreboding ...

... and Vincent gets quickly on the radio.

VINCENT
(into radio)
Kim, listen. Pugh's gone. I'm not certain but there's a chance he's had the same idea we did.

KIM
(over radio)
Say again?

VINCENT
He could be checking the outlet at the rear. And if he hears you making a noise ...

CUT TO:

64 INT. SITE 2 - WASTE GAS OUTLET. NIGHT 64

Kim is up inside the cylindrical outlet housing, frozen in the middle of removing a huge filter and passing it to Shaw.

KIM
(low, into radio)
Shit, Vincent, this is like a giant echo chamber. Can't even move without making a sound.

VINCENT
(over radio)
Then pull out and come back.

KIM
I'm practically there! If I quit now we're back to square one.

Nervous silence as they consider their options.

VINCENT
Alright, listen. Me and Lane are gonna try something that could end this thing. Draw Dalby and Harrington into the airlock and swamp it with antibiotic.

KIM
You sure that'll work?

VINCENT
As much as we can be.

KIM
Okay, do it. Take them out, that'll just leave Pugh. And he can't cover both exits at once.

CUT TO:

65 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME & AIRLOCK. NIGHT 65

Vincent and Lane are already jumping out of the airlock, un-wedging the inner door -- which they SLAM shut.

VINCENT
(into radio)
Here goes.

He STABS a button, and as they watch through the porthole, the bolts on the outer door CLUNK open.

VINCENT & LANE'S POV

as Harrington and Dalby pull open the outer door -- then pause, almost as if sensing a trap.

BACK TO SCENE

Vincent moves deliberately away from the porthole.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Don't look. Don't give them a reason to suspect.

Instead, they watch the status-gauge on the control panel.

But nothing's happening.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
They're not gonna go for it.

KIM
Give them chance.

VINCENT
(shaking head)
They've out-thought us all the way. Distracting us with the airlock while Pugh --

Muffled CLUNK of the outer door closing -- then the gauge indicates the air is CYCLING.

Lane risks a look.

LANE
They're both inside!

She HITS the 'DECONTAMINATE' button on the control panel.

VINCENT & LANE'S POV

as the atomised antibiotic vapour SPRAYS into the confined space, coating Harrington and Dalby in a sheen of moisture.

They seem suddenly to panic -- Dalby JABBING at the inner controls impotently.

Then they brace themselves against the walls, dizzy and off-balance, the spray beginning to take effect.

BACK TO SCENE

VINCENT
(into radio)
Kim, it's working. Sit tight.
(relieved joy)
Lane, get the syringe. Once they're down we'll pump some more into them. Just to be sure.

FOLLOWING LANE

as she jogs over to the

MINI-LAB

and runs inside to grab the syringe and bottles.

But just as she's about to turn away she glances at the microscope monitor screen, which is still displaying the slide of Brunel's blood.

Some of the bacilli are still dead.

But others are moving again -- and once more multiplying.

LANE
Oh, dear God ...

Ashen-faced, she drops the syringe and heads out, looking over at Brunel's prone body with an expression of horror.

Brunel's body is once again moving. He's reviving.

Vincent, following Lane's gaze, sees the same thing -- and reels with gut-wrenching disbelief.

LANE (CONT'D)
Bacteria's developing resistance.
The effect's only temporary.

And at that moment, the inner airlock door HISSES open.

Dalby and Harrington are on the floor inside, sagging slowly into temporary inertia ...

... but it's only a matter of time before they too revive.

VINCENT
(panicked)
Find more rope. Quick!

CUT TO:

66 INT. SITE 2 - WASTE GAS OUTLET. NIGHT 66

Kim and Shaw are still immobile, afraid to make a move -- Kim still wedged up inside the sloping cylinder.

KIM
(low, into radio)
Vincent, what's happening?

VINCENT
(over radio, scared)
We need help back here ...!

They wait for more -- but hear nothing except Vincent's rapid, panicked BREATHING and the RUSTLE of activity.

SHAW
What do we do?

KIM
We go back.

She starts shuffling quickly but quietly down from inside the outlet. Shaw reaches up to help her --

-- and dislodges the power tool hooked on her belt, sending it CLATTERING down inside the echoing cylinder.

They freeze --'Oh, shit!'

The next moment a hellishly-loud POUNDING begins on the outer cover of the outlet. Pugh.

Kim drops everything -- all pretence of caution gone -- and SCRAMBLES down out of the outlet.

SNAGS her environment suit on a bolt.
Has to struggle to pulls herself free.
The POUNDING, hard and relentless -- BAM! -- BAM! -- BAM!

They RUN for their lives, back along the gangway as Pugh continues HAMMERING ...

KIM (CONT'D)
Christ, one tiny crack in that casing and --

EXPLOSIVE BLAST OF WIND as the valve BLOWS outwards -- air being sucked through the resultant hole like a hurricane.

CUT TO:

67 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME. NIGHT 67

Air-pressure alarm-klaxon BLARING, Vincent and Lane are forced to abandon their frenetic search for rope.

Run and grab their helmets. LOCK them on.

VINCENT
(into radio)
Kim!? What the --

KIM
(over radio)
Valve's gone, Pugh's inside.

CUT TO:

68 INT. SITE 2 - UTILITY BASEMENT. NIGHT 68

Shaw and Kim STRUGGLE along the gangway against the oncoming BLAST of air -- Kim briefly shining her torch behind to see if they're being followed.

Big mistake.

Pugh is coming after them, sledge-hammer in hand.

With an inarticulate MOAN of horror she SCRAMBLES onwards, not looking back again.

KIM
(into radio)
Vincent, we're coming! Find something to stop Pugh!

Shaw reaches the ladder which they'd temporarily bridged across the water-tank.

He RUNS across -- the ladder CLATTERING up and down under his weight with each step -- shaking and shifting ...

... so that when Kim FOLLOWS straight after him the whole thing dislodges -- and she PLUNGES down into the tank.

KIM (CONT'D)
Shaw! Help me!

Shaw back-tracks and looks down, horrified.

Tosses one end of a rope down to her.
She SPLASHES, grabbing it.
Pulls herself up from the tank.

Shaw takes the strain ...

... but then he spots Pugh, SCRAMBLING towards him along the gangway beyond the tank.

And he drops the rope.

Kim SPLASHES back down into the tank as Shaw turns and runs, leaving her to her fate.

In a last-gasp effort, CRYING OUT, Kim begins fishing under the filthy water for the fallen ladder.

But too late. Pugh appears above her, hammer in hand ...

CUT TO:

69 INT. SITE 2 - HYDROPONIC DOME. NIGHT 69

Kim's distant SCREAM echoes up from the utility basement -- then is abruptly cut off.

Vincent and Lane pause in their frantic preparations -- then press on even quicker:

Vincent BREAKS the seal on a box of hand-held flares. Lane pours the flammable chemicals into a spare helmet.

Next second, Shaw appears below. CLIMBS up in a panic, almost in tears.

VINCENT
(helping him out)
Where's Kim?

SHAW
She's gone.

No time for Vincent to react -- because Pugh now appears at the foot of the ladder. Vincent tries to pull it up ...

... but Pugh clings onto it from below. Begins climbing.

VINCENT
Lane, now!

Lane SPLASHES the chemicals down over Pugh.
Vincent FIRES UP a flare.
Tosses it down the hole.

Pugh BURSTS into flames -- the out-rushing air FANNING the fire and turning him into a blazing human torch.

But even now he keeps coming -- his flesh and suit both BURNING away -- clawing his way out of the basement.

Lane lunges at him -- tries to stick him with a syringe -- but he SMASHES it aside. No go.

Instead, Vincent, Lane and Shaw grab the flares and excavation charges and RUN for the airlock.

They try desperately to DRAG out Dalby and Harrington's bodies -- but there's simply no time.

Pugh lumbers towards them, still BURNING -- and they have no choice but to jump inside and SLAM the door.

CUT TO:

70 INT/EXT. AIRLOCK/SITE 2. NIGHT 70

The cycling air HISSES, but it gives them no comfort.

They may have escaped Pugh -- but two more undead bodies are at their feet, face down, in the crowded space ...

... and, slowly but surely, they're stirring back to life.

Vincent looks at the twitching bodies -- then at the slowly-moving gauge -- panic threatening to overwhelm him again.

Lane sees he's sweating, beginning to lose it ...

... but this time, she's with him.

LANE
Vincent. Vincent! You've got to get us out of here. Think about home. Blue skies.

He looks into her eyes.

Forces himself to hold it together.

Just then, Dalby drunkenly tries to get up onto her hands and knees, the scalpel clutched in her hand.

LANE (CONT'D)
Get that blade off her!

Lane and Vincent try to grab it but Dalby flops back down, clutching the scalpel tight beneath her so they can't get it.

Then Harrington stirs, his hand GROPING for Shaw's ankle.

Shaw SCREAMS. Completely loses it.

Begins STOMPING on Harrington frenetically, MASHING his face but still pounding AGAIN and AGAIN with his foot.

Mercifully, the outer door HISSES open.

VINCENT
Come on! Take one Rover, disable the other.

Vincent and Lane run outside ...

... but Shaw is still STAMPING -- on Dalby's face, now -- blindly consumed by frenzy and loathing.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Shaw, for Christ's sake!

Shaw belatedly snaps out of it. Heads after them --

-- but the semi-conscious Harrington GRABS at Shaw's foot. TRIPS him.

Vincent and Lane backtrack to help Shaw to his feet -- but as they do so, Dalby LUNGES upwards with shocking speed ...

STABS the scalpel deep into Lane's stomach.

Lane CRIES OUT.

Vincent KICKS Dalby in the face. PULLS Lane out of the airlock and half-carries her away, Shaw trailing behind.

Quickly primes one of the charges as he runs.

Tosses it into the first Rover as they pass -- then, still supporting Lane, hurries onwards towards the second Rover.

HUGE EXPLOSION as the charge goes off -- lifting the rear of the Rover before it CRASHES back down, a smoking wreck.

They reach the second Rover. Vincent looks back to see Dalby and Harrington STUMBLING after them.

Tosses a second charge. BLOWS them off their feet.

But as they climb into the Rover, he sees the two pursuers already getting back up, unstoppable.

CUT TO:

71 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 71

They collapse through the inner door into the passenger cabin -- Shaw effusively contrite, trying to help Lane.

SHAW
I'm sorry ... Lane, I'm sorry ...

LANE
Get away from me!

VINCENT
Take us out of here before they smash their way in!

Numb, Shaw runs for the driver's seat. POWERS UP and moves off as Vincent helps Lane onto the seats. Unzips her suit.

LANE
Oh, shit ...

Blood is welling from the puncture wound.

Vincent hesitates momentarily -- worried about infection -- but then pulls off his glove and uses it to pad the wound.

VINCENT
We need the med unit at base.

LANE
Dream on.

VINCENT
Don't have the kit here to --

LANE
You think they'll just sit back and let us do that? Forget it!

Vincent falls silent, pulling out a first-aid kit and treating the wound as best he can.

LANE (CONT'D)
What is it, eighteen hours before the relief ship arrives? How long can we last in this thing?

Vincent shakes his head, overwhelmed by events.

VINCENT
Shaw. Check the batteries and O2 gauges.
(to Lane)
We'll be fine. We'll hole up somewhere and wait it out.

He draws a shot of antibiotic into a syringe. Injects her.

LANE
What's the point of that?

VINCENT
Stop it before it takes hold.
Your body will fight it.

LANE
If the gut-wound doesn't kill me
first.

Vincent shakes his head -- 'Not gonna happen' -- and as he finishes dressing her wound, she takes his hand. Holds it in a gesture that is more than mere thanks.

Then the Rover slows and stops.

A moment later, Shaw steps back into the passenger cabin -- his expression one of disbelief.

SHAW
There's not enough air.

Vincent jumps up abruptly. Heads into the forward cabin to check the O2 gauges himself.

He's visibly stunned as he looks back at Lane.

VINCENT
Barely two-thirds of what we need.

The words take several moments to sink in. It's a death sentence -- for all of them, or at the very least, one ...

... and when they look at each other again, they do so through the filter of that new-found knowledge.

Shaw, in particular, gazes at Lane, his mind ticking over. He quickly looks away when she catches his stare.

Then the silent, numb contemplation is broken when the radar on the dashboard begins BLEEPING intermittently.

Vincent looks. Two glowing traces are showing at the outer edge of the sweeping, circular screen.

CUT TO:

72 EXT. BARREN PLAIN. NIGHT 72

The rear Rover door opens. Shaw, Lane and Vincent look out.

The Rover has stopped on a scarred, cratered plain. Magnificent moonlit desolation.

Deep tyre-tracks in the still Martian dust track away behind them, into the far distance ...

... to where two barely-discernible figures are slowly, inexorably, closing the gap on foot.

LANE
Oh, Jesus ...

Vincent raises a pair of digital binoculars.

VINCENT'S POV - THROUGH BINOCULARS

An enhanced, night-scope image of the two advancing figures.

It's Dalby and Harrington -- their faces damaged by Shaw's assault, bodies pierced by shrapnel -- but still coming, steadily and tirelessly. Following the Rover tracks.

BACK TO SCENE

to where this latest twist has hit the trio like a hammer-blow -- and they're teetering on anguished defeatism.

Lane slumps down, beaten, holding her wound in agony.

It seems to be game over...

... but this time it's Vincent who somehow finds the strength to keep going.

VINCENT
If we give in, they win. And if they get to the ship ... get back home ...

The horrible thought spurs him on further.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
A dust storm'd hide the Rover tracks, if we could find one. And there's spare O2 at the base.

LANE
They'll be waiting.

VINCENT
Then we go down fighting.

LANE
Even if that means ending up like the others?

VINCENT
What choice do we have?

Throughout, Shaw has remained silent, subtly ostracised by the other two. But as Vincent climbs back into the airlock:

SHAW
Don't I get a say?

VINCENT
If you've got a better idea.

SHAW
Anything's better than suicide.

VINCENT
Without air we're dead out here anyway. We fight, at least there's a chance.

SHAW
And what do we fight them with?

VINCENT
I dunno, Shaw! Whatever happened to the power of positive think-ing. You used to be full of it!

SHAW
There are other options. We should discuss it rationally.

LANE
Rationally!? Is that some kind of sick joke after what happened back there?

SHAW
I said I was sorry!

VINCENT
Okay, what have we missed? What other options?

LANE
(interrupting)
One of us gets off the ride and gives the other two air. That's one of them, isn't it, Shaw.

Shaw say nothing, busted.

VINCENT
Nobody's getting off.

LANE
(gathering steam)
No, he's right. Let's think about this <u>ra</u>tionally.

She angrily turns back to Shaw, clutching her wound.

LANE (CONT'D)
So who's usually the first to get dumped in this kind of scenario? Come on, let's hear it, Shaw.
(MORE)

LANE (CONT'D)
(losing it)
Say it!

SHAW
Site Nine.

Shaw's sudden inspiration catches Lane and Vincent -- and in fact Shaw himself -- totally off-guard.

LANE
What!?

SHAW
We've forgotten about Site Nine.

CUT TO:

73 EXT. MARE BOREUM. NIGHT 73

The Rover crawls along the shoreline towards Site Nine -- the headlights now dim, barely illuminating the way ahead.

CUT TO:

74 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 74

Vincent steers cautiously towards the familiar rock ridge, behind which is Site Nine.

VINCENT
Batteries in the red. This better not be a blind alley.

LANE
Shaw's right. No point putting up a storm-shelter if there's no oxygen to ride out a storm.

They head onwards. To their right, out over the oceanic plain, a distant bolt of lightning briefly splits the sky.

Vincent and Lane exchange a glance.

VINCENT
Just when you don't need one ...

Lane smiles -- then they're around the rock ridge and

SITE 9

comes into view. Vincent stops a short distance away. Studies the seemingly deserted camp.

All is as it was left: storm-shelter, scattered equipment, and the yawning pit.

The weak headlights cast pools of black shadow behind the piles of equipment and surrounding rock outcrops -- any one of which could hide a waiting enemy.

LANE
Rock, paper, scissors, to see who goes out?

He smiles grimly at her humour, but gestures at her injury.

VINCENT
You're not going anywhere.

He gets up and heads reluctantly into the passenger cabin, Lane following. Shaw watches silently, thoughtfully, as Vincent picks up a helmet.

Lane helps him, checking his suit-seals. There's a hint of pensive intimacy in her actions.

LANE
Guess there's no point me saying, be careful.

VINCENT
Hey, I'm no hero. Just don't go anywhere without me.

A further look between them -- but as Vincent lifts on his helmet, Shaw suddenly speaks up.

SHAW
I'll go.

Lane and Vincent look at him, stunned. He appears torn by remorse.

SHAW (CONT'D)
I've got some serious making up to do. Let's leave it at that, okay?

Then he takes the helmet and puts it on quickly, as if fearful of changing his mind.

Grabs a torch and steps into the airlock.

CUT TO:

75 EXT. SITE 9. NIGHT 75

Shaw opens the rear door of the Rover. Shines the torch around, checking for danger, then warily climbs down.

He creeps towards the camp, staying within the cones of illumination thrown by the headlights.

VINCENT
(over radio)
First hint of movement, get the hell back in here.

Shaw doesn't reply. He's sweating, his entire being focussed on his surroundings. Menacing shadows all around.

About twenty metres ahead is the creepy black maw of the pit, but he needn't go near it. The equipment caches and storm-shelter are closer by.

He approaches a cargo container. Makes to open it -- then pauses, suddenly afraid of what it may contain.

Braced for action, he FLIPS up the lid.

Nothing.

He moves on to the compact, plastic, two-man storm-shelter.

He pauses, BREATHING hard. Girds himself once again -- then WRENCHES open the door.

Nobody inside.

However, there are boxes and ruck-sacks in the corner, containing water and emergency supplies --

-- and, hallelujah! Three portable tanks of O2.

Shaw can't prevent a GROAN of relief escaping his lips.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
(over radio)
What is it? Have you found it?

Shaw is about to answer -- but then he pauses, brooding.

LANE
(over radio)
What're you waiting for, Shaw? Bring it in.

SHAW
I don't think I will.

CUT TO:

76 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 76

Through the windscreen, Lane and Vincent look at Shaw in the distance, stunned by his comment.

VINCENT
(into radio, to Shaw)
What are you saying?

SHAW
(over radio)
If we split up, we stand a better chance.

VINCENT
How do you figure that?

SHAW
They're following the Rover. That'll leave me free to move around on foot. More chance that one of us can get to the landing ship before those things do.

Vincent and Lane exchange a look, not buying his excuse.

VINCENT
We came miles out of the way to get here. Three of us breathing the air for too long. Won't be enough left now even for two.

SHAW
There will if you're careful.

VINCENT
We need those cylinders.

Shaw doesn't reply -- and Lane loses it.

LANE
Shaw, you son of a bitch!

SHAW
What, you think this is about me saving my own skin? I'm trying to save all of us.

VINCENT
I'm gonna give you three seconds to get back in here.

SHAW
You better get going. Dalby and Harrington won't be far behind.

Lane and Vincent glance at the radar. The two pursuing traces are again showing at the edge of the screen.

VINCENT
Shaw's lost it. I'm going out.

SHAW
(over radio)
Just leave! You're gonna bring those things down on all of us!

But Vincent turns and reaches for his helmet.

CUT TO:

77 EXT. SITE 9. NIGHT 77

Shaw panics. Dodges into the shelter. Empties a ruck-sack of its supplies and jams in the oxygen cylinders.

DRAGS it outside, hoists it over his shoulder, turns to make his escape --

-- and runs smack-bang into Kim.

Reanimated and back for her revenge -- Shaw's worst nightmare. He WAILS in abject fear.

Swings the O2 tanks into Kim, KNOCKING her backwards, then RUNS back towards the Rover ...

... but Pugh steps out from behind a boulder -- horribly burned but still functioning even now -- blocking his path.

GRABS Shaw in a pre-planned pincer-movement.

And as Kim closes in again, wielding a pick taken from the dig-site, Shaw SCREAMS ...

CUT TO:

78 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 78

Vincent is stepping into the airlock as a stunned Lane YELLS from the front.

LANE
Vincent it's too late!

He hurries back to the front where Lane is already POWERING UP the Rover. Looks out of the windscreen ...

... to where Shaw is falling under repeated blows from Kim's pick -- and Pugh is already heading for the Rover, sledge-hammer in hand.

Lane FLOORS IT. Lurches forwards in a tight turn, getting the Christ away from there. Out across the plain.

But they're still not out of the woods.

The dashboard lights dim, the WHIRR of the engine faltering.

LANE (CONT'D)
Barely making twelve MPH.
They'll catch up.

Multiple pursuing traces BLEEP from the radar, but Vincent desperately switches modes and distances on the screen.

VINCENT
Where the hell is that storm ...?
There! Ninety-six degrees east.

Lane alters course as Vincent begins THROWING switches, turning off everything they don't need.

In darkness, the Rover WHIRRS slowly onwards -- sickly -- while Vincent and Lane hold their breath. Willing the Rover onwards with every fibre of their being.

Then, a bolt of dry-lightning CRACKS down to the left, and the next moment they're BUFFETED by a gust of wind.

On their palpable relief

CUT TO:

79 EXT. MARE BOREUM. NIGHT 79

The Rover ROLLS along, leaving furrows in the sand -- but within moments the tracks are scoured away by the WIND.

Nearby, a TWISTER forms in the airborne dust-cloud, burns out briefly, then forms again, growing in strength. More dry-lightning CRACKLES, rending the air.

Finally, the Rover stops, now barely visible through the swirling dust. The last of the lights wink out.

CUT TO:

80 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 80

It's later. Outside, the wind HOWLS. Inside, Vincent and Lane huddle opposite each other in the darkness.

Vincent rests, eyes closed, recovering. Lane quietly opens up her suit and dressing to look at her wound. Her t-shirt is soaked with blood -- and the wound is badly infected.

She covers it up again. Tries to block out the worry.

LANE
Air's getting thick.

Vincent opens his eyes. Glances at the O2 gauges -- now dangerously low -- then looks at his watch.

VINCENT
Nine hours before they make orbit. If they come down immediately instead of waiting...

LANE
And how we get to the Lander before they do?

VINCENT
I'm working on it.

LANE
Genius takes time. Right?

They share a rare, wry smile.

VINCENT
They've run rings around us. But they must have limits.

LANE
Do you ... do you think they can feel? I mean, emotion?

VINCENT
No. Not like us.

Their eyes connect and hold -- and Vincent's generic 'us' suddenly takes on a much more intimate resonance.

It becomes a silent, mutual declaration of affection --

-- broken only when Lane winces involuntarily, in pain.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Let me check that wound.

He eases up his aching body and crosses the cabin to kneel next to her -- but she shakes her head.

LANE
Don't look. It's ... infected.

Vincent takes a moment to respond, grasping at straws.

VINCENT
We get to the Lander, we've a direct line to mission control. They'll know what to do.

LANE
And I always took you for a pessimist.

VINCENT
That's just a cunning plan to fool everyone.

She smiles in reply -- but the fear that has gripped her seeps through into her eyes.

Vincent sees it. Huddles down next to her.

LANE
(after a moment)
Can't stop thinking about Brunel.

There's a grim, pregnant pause.

LANE (CONT'D)
Do you believe we have a soul?

VINCENT
I'm not sure I like to think
about it.

LANE
What do you suppose happens to it
if your body can't find peace?

VINCENT
You mean, is it trapped inside?
Still aware but with no control?

It's the worst thing Vincent can imagine, and he has to suppress his horror at the thought.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Better pray it isn't.

LANE
I don't want to be like that,
Vincent.

VINCENT
Shhh.

It's not a command to be quiet, it's a hush to a child at bedtime. A reassurance that all will be well.

He puts one arm around her shoulder, the other hand holding hers in her lap. She welcomes it.

It could simply be two frightened people comforting each other in the dark -- but we sense it's much more than that.

They close their eyes.

CUT TO:

81 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 81

It's later. The wind outside has eased considerably, now only an occasional GUST.

Lane's eyes SNAPS awake as if from a nightmare -- her face pale and drawn.

She looks around, still wired from the dream -- and notices the 'LIVE COMMUNICATION' light flashing on the dashboard.

LANE
(stunned)
Vincent ...

Vincent rouses. Focusses. Then follows her gaze.

A brief moment of disbelief -- then he jumps up and hurries to the radio.

He works the controls -- first getting a BURST of static -- then, over the speaker:

AURORA COMMANDER
... standard orbit and preparing an emergency descent. Clear the landing area near the base. If you're receiving, please respond.

VINCENT
Holy shit, they're here! They must've burned fuel after they got the Mayday.

He SMASHES his fist down onto the dashboard in frustration.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
No way to transmit to orbit ...

He POWERS UP the Rover as the anxious radio voice continues.

AURORA COMMANDER
If anyone's receiving, we're assuming a total communication failure. Hold tight, we'll be down ASAP. Over and out.

Reeling, Vincent CRUNCHES the Rover into gear and THROTTLES UP to the best speed the dwindling batteries can make.

CUT TO:

82 EXT. TANTALUS RIFT VALLEY. NIGHT 82

A black sky awash with brilliant stars, all deathly still.

But through them moves one particularly bright star, crossing the heavens gracefully.

As we watch, a smaller star breaks away from it and begins a slow, steady descent.

Below it, the Rover struggles over the crest of a rise ...

... then begins to pick up speed on a long, shallow incline down into the rift valley.

CUT TO:

83 INT. ROVER 2. NIGHT 83

Vincent KNOCKS the Rover out of gear and allows gravity to take over. The speedo climbs to twenty. Twenty-five.

Far ahead down the length of the valley, barely visible in the distance, are the lights of the dome.

VINCENT
If we're too late - if they get to it first - I'll ram the Lander.

She understands. Nods, 'Do it.'

The speedo's up to thirty-five and Vincent is having a job avoiding boulders. But no choice. Can't afford to slow.

They hit the bottom of the incline and race onwards.

Vincent looks up momentarily ...

Sees the Lander, its squat insect-shape now clearly visible -- its trajectory taking it slowly down towards the base.

... then he looks forwards again, too late.

A ridge -- too close to avoid -- and they SLAM over it.

The Rover is airborne for a second before CRASHING down, the wheels digging in and SKEWING to the left ...

... then the Rover SMASHES full-on into an outcrop of rock.

Vincent and Lane are pitched forwards, SLAMMING into the dashboard. Lane CRIES in pain.

Vincent GOOSES the throttle, trying to get going again -- but is answered only by a sick, impotent WHINE. No go.

Fuck!!

Almost in tears with anguish, he grabs a helmet, jams it onto Lane, then snatches another for himself.

HITS the 'EMERGENCY DE-COMPRESSION' button.

EXPLOSIVE HISS as the air VENTS from the cabin and the airlock doors SPRING open simultaneously on auto.

He grabs Lane and drags her from the Rover.

CUT TO:

84 EXT. TANTALUS RIFT VALLEY. NIGHT 84

Abandoning the Rover, Vincent and Lane run desperately onwards -- but there's still several hundred metres to go.

Ahead and above, the Lander FIRES its retros, braking to a hover near the base.

Meanwhile, underneath, six figures -- helmets and new suits hiding their dead and damaged bodies -- walk calmly out of the base, assembling to wait for touchdown.

One of them even raises an arm. Waves to the Lander.

VINCENT
Everything looks normal. They're gonna land and open up.

But Lane is lagging behind, GASPING. She struggles on a little further -- then collapses, WEEPING.

LANE
Can't make it ...

Vincent pulls up. Back-tracks to help her -- but is shocked when he sees her deathly-pale face.

LANE (CONT'D)
Bleeding again ... You go on ...

VINCENT
(torn)
I'll come back. Do you hear?
I'll come back for you.

She manages a weak nod -- but as he tries to rise she clings on to him, as if having second thoughts ...

... then, she lets go. Vincent reluctantly gets up and runs onwards, hugging the rock outcrop for cover.

The Lander is on final descent, ENGINES FIRING, insect legs splayed for landing. Dust billows underneath -- then she's down, settling on the springs as the ENGINE cuts out.

The dust clears and the six waiting, suited figures approach the Lander, sun-visors hiding their dreadful faces.

Vincent staggers closer, SHOUTING into the helmet radio, switching through the channels on his wrist control panel.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Aurora, do not open up, repeat, do not open up ...

But the hatch on the front of the Lander opens and the AURORA COMMANDER climbs down -- followed one after the other by the remaining seven RELIEF CREW.

The undead calmly wait in a group, letting the new arrivals disembark as the relief ship Commander approaches.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Aurora, no!

Too late, he hits the correct frequency on his radio. HEARS a brief word of greeting from the Commander ...

... then the undead strike.

Stabbing, cutting, hacking -- smiting down the unarmed relief crew one-by-one -- mercilessly and relentlessly.

With the SCREAMS of the victims in his ears, Vincent collapses to his knees in abject despair.

He can't bear to look. Can't bear to listen. Switches the radio channel so he doesn't have to. Then ...

LANE
(over radio)
Vincent ...

Desolate, he looks around. Lane is about twenty metres behind, approaching unsteadily, leaning against the rock outcrop for support.

Too shocked and exhausted to move, he waits for her, looking towards the Lander with utter resignation.

VINCENT
Got one charge left ... blow up the ship. We're finished anyway.

Lane doesn't answer -- and Vincent suddenly senses something amiss.

He spins around, alert.

Lane pauses a few feet away, steadying herself against the rock -- looking back at him with <u>clouded eyes</u>.

Vincent's face registers sick horror -- but Lane's expression pleads for help.

LANE
Vincent ... It's still me.

Is it really still Lane speaking? Or is it a lure?

LANE (CONT'D)
It's not like we said. I can fight it ...

She takes a step closer but her knees buckle, weak -- and Vincent instinctively reaches out to keep her upright ...

VINCENT
It's okay. I'm here.

... holds her tenderly for one brief moment ...

SCREAM of rage as she abruptly turns on him, SMASHING his helmet against the rock face, fingers CLAWING at the seal.

Vincent tries to push her away, but she's all over him. BASHES his helmet against the rock again.

He SLUMPS down beneath her, dazed.
Lane TEARS at the oxygen hose on his back.
Trying to rip it out.

For a second it's almost as if he can't bear to fight back.

Then he grabs a rock.
Twists around.
SMASHES it clean through Lane's visor.

Lane falls flat-out, blinded by blood and shards of glass.

But she won't quit. She rolls onto her knees and gropes for him, unable to see. At the same time begging, GASPING.

LANE
Vincent, I'm sorry ... don't leave me.
(tormented)
Oh, Christ, you have to believe me ... I'm still here ...

The words skewer him -- almost overwhelm him with horror -- but after what happened he can't listen. Can't trust her.

And with a final shudder of despair and disgust he forces himself onwards. He runs, hugging the rocks, towards the

LANDER

which is already powering up with a WHINE of turbines as his undead colleagues climb aboard, wasting no time.

The relief crew lay sprawled on the ground, dead.

Vincent pauses at the end of the rock outcrop, still unseen, the Lander now only about fifty metres away. He catches his breath -- only one chance to get this right.

The last man aboard, Shaw -- now reanimated and integrated into the group -- pauses outside the hatch.

He scans the terrain one last time, then climbs in and closes the hatch.

Vincent immediately breaks cover and runs, PANTING for breath, across the open ground to the Lander.

He steps over the relief-crew's bodies -- half-expecting them to stir into reanimation.

Then he climbs quickly up the ladder. Pulls open the hatch and -- as the WHINE of the turbines abruptly increases -- clambers inside.

CUT TO:

85 INT. LANDER - AIRLOCK. NIGHT 85

A cramped, cubic space. Vincent shuts the hatch behind him, the noise masked by the RACKET from the turbines.

He looks up at the inner-hatch, above his head, expecting it to be pulled open at any second ...

... but his entry remains undetected. He cautiously inches closer to the tiny inspection-slit in the hatch.

VINCENT'S POV

Up inside the cabin of the Lander, his undead colleagues are taking their flight seats, Brunel at the controls.

Brunel reaches forward with his good arm. Presses a button.

BACK TO SCENE

as Vincent is SLAMMED backwards by the sudden G-forces.

CUT TO:

86 EXT. TANTALUS RIFT VALLEY. NIGHT 86

ROAR of engines as the ascent-stage of the Lander BLASTS upwards into the night sky.

CUT TO:

87 INT. LANDER - AIRLOCK. NIGHT 87

Vincent is hyperventilating -- squashed back against the deck and buffeted by the incredible VIBRATION and the ROAR of the engines.

Fighting his demons, he screws his eyes shut. Rides it out.

And as they reach escape-velocity, the G-forces slowly begin to ease.

He opens his eyes. Gets a grip. Remembers what it is he has to do.

Reaches into one of his pockets. Pulls out the last remaining explosive charge.

Sets the digital LED display on the side of the small cylinder. Ten-second countdown.

A final moment of hesitation -- extinction staring him in the face -- then he FLICKS the switch.

Closes his eyes.

9 .. 8 .. 7 .. 6 .. 5 .. 4 .. 3 .. 2 .. 1 ...

A beat.

Nothing happens.

Vincent opens his eyes, adrenaline awash in his system.

The LED display is flashing ‘ERROR’.

He fumbles with the device. Resets for five seconds. Repeats the whole process. Watches the countdown ...

‘ERROR’.

The look on Vincent’s face is almost indescribable -- a mixture of rage, anguish and despair.

CUT TO:

88 EXT. MARS ORBIT. NIGHT 88

The Lander makes orbit and the ENGINES finally cut out.

Far below, the eerie red Martian surface is still in darkness, flashes of lightning arcing through the atmosphere.

The Lander closes quickly on a larger craft -- the Orbiter -- matching the latter’s speed ready for docking.

The Orbiter consists of a thin central tube with a Command Module at one end and the engines at the other. To either side of the tube are huge cylindrical living-quarters. The entire ship can be spun on it’s axis to simulate gravity.

The Lander FIRES it’s control jets and glides in towards a docking portal at the Orbiter’s mid-point.

CUT TO:

89 INT. LANDER - AIRLOCK. NIGHT 89

A muffled CLUNK and the Lander JOLTS violently, docking. Then all is still.

Terrified, Vincent inches closer to the inspection slit. Peeks into the cabin above.

VINCENT'S POV

as his undead crew-mates open up the docking hatch and, one by one, pull themselves through in the zero-gravity.

BACK TO SCENE

Vincent opens up the visor on his helmet, taking several deep, steadying breaths as he thinks.

Then he remembers something. Rifles through his pockets.

Pulls out the last of the hand-held flares -- formulating one final, desperate idea.

He peers again through the inspection slit. All clear.

Then he opens the inner hatch. Pulls himself up into the

LANDER CABIN

Every spare inch is crammed with supplies and oxygen cylinders, destined for the surface but never unloaded.

He squeezes between the crew seats, fast and graceful in the zero-G, then pauses at the docking hatch.

CUT TO:

90 INT. ORBITER - CENTRAL TUBE. NIGHT 90

Vincent peeps out from the docking hatch, almost sick with fear but determined to carry out his plan.

He's in a circular tube about thirty metres long and two metres wide, ladders running the entire length.

Gloomy red emergency lights are the only illumination.

At the bottom end of the tube is the Engine Module, at the top end, the Command Module -- and this is where his undead colleagues are heading.

One by one, they're pulling themselves up the ladder and through the hatch into the Command Module.

Meanwhile, Vincent is aiming elsewhere. Slightly above him and to either side are access hatches into the twin cylindrical living-quarters.

He waits for the last of the undead to climb up into the Command Module -- then he glides out of the docking hatch and pushes himself upwards.

If one of the undead looks down now from the open Command Module hatch, Vincent is finished ...

... but he remains undetected -- and within moments he ducks sideways into the

LIVING-QUARTERS

Gets his bearings in the compartmentalised, cylindrical space. Heads towards the service area.

Floats through a doorway -- and immediately freezes.

Harrington is dead ahead, his back to Vincent. He's working at a control panel, but he begins to turn ...

Christ! Vincent quickly pulls himself behind cover, between banks of equipment.

Did Harrington see him? He daren't look.

A second later, Harrington floats past Vincent's hiding place, unaware. Heading back out into the central tube.

Sweating, Vincent emerges from hiding. Heads onwards.

A background HUM begins, then another at a higher PITCH, as ship-systems are brought on-line.

Vincent pauses briefly by the control panel Harrington was using. Looks at the status-display on the monitor.

Even as he watches, a series of warning icons switch from red to green, then a larger icon appears on the screen -- 'MAIN ENGINES' -- and a six-minute countdown is triggered.

Holy crap! Vincent springs back into action. Pushes himself onwards, through a bulk-head hatch into the

SERVICE AREA

RIPS a panel from a wall -- making NOISE but no time to worry -- revealing a densely-packed row of O2 cylinders.

Jams the remaining hand-held flare into one of the straps holding the cylinders, so it rests snug against a tank.

CUTS an oxygen hose with a penknife and bends it around to point at the flare, a fast stream of oxygen HISSING ...

... then IGNITES the flare.

The pure O2 instantly turns the flare into a BLOW-TORCH, the super-heated chemical-burn already beginning to heat the thick casing of the oxygen tank.

He quickly JAMS the panel back in place. Spins around and pushes himself through the hatch back into the

LIVING QUARTERS

He quickly retraces his route, hope rising that he can get back to the Lander undetected.

Pulls himself through the hatch-way to the central tube --

-- and SLAMS straight into Harrington coming the other way.

Harrington instantly goes for Vincent's throat.

Vincent tries to pull free, but can find no purchase in the zero-G. Has to fight back.

For the first time, he's locked in close-quarter, hand-to-hand combat with these things. Vicious, dirty street-fighting against a murderous, unstoppable foe.

They spin, SCRAPPING like animals. PUNCHES Harrington in the throat. No effect. Harrington HEAD-BUTTS Vincent.

They SLAM backwards into a wall -- purchase at last -- Vincent holds on and KICKS Harrington away with his legs...

... only to find Kim rushing at him with the pick.

Two against one.

Vincent dodges a SLASH from the pick -- KICKS Kim in the face -- but Harrington is back -- GRABS him from behind as Kim swings again -- SLASHES his arm --

Vincent ROARS in pain and horror -- he knows what infection from that weapon might mean.

SMASHES his helmet backwards into Harrington's face -- breaks free and twists Kim's wrist, SPLINTERS the bones and snatches the pick --

-- but then Shaw appears -- Shit, now three against one!

Shaw grabs at him -- Vincent CHOPS him ruthlessly across the eyes with the pick -- blinding him --

Then the other two come at Vincent simultaneously --

He twists -- HITS a red button on a control panel ...

CUT TO:

91 EXT. MARS ORBIT. NIGHT 91

The attitude jets FIRE sideways, sending the Orbiter into a sudden axial spin ...

CUT TO:

92 INT. ORBITER - LIVING-QUARTERS. NIGHT 92

... which wrenches everything out of zero-G -- catching the undead off-guard -- SLAMS them against the outer wall.

Vincent hangs on -- pulls himself towards a door.

But Kim regains her footing quickly -- and as Vincent climbs through the doorway, she GRABS at him.

Vincent YANKS her head down by her hair and CHOPS the pick into the back of her neck, hacking into her spine.

Her limbs give way, useless -- and Vincent KICKS her aside.

SLAMS and LOCKS the door in the nick of time -- Harrington POUNDING from the other side.

Vincent looks desperately around for another exit.

Spots an inspection cover in the opposite wall.

RIPS the cover free and looks inside.

It's an engine maintenance crawl-way -- the tightest squeeze you can imagine -- almost pitch black.

Vincent looks around the room again -- got to be another way out of here -- but there isn't ...

.. so no choice. He climbs inside -- just as Harrington SMASHES through the door behind him.

ENGINE MODULE CRAWLWAY

Vincent pulls himself into the dark crawl-way, squeezing between pipes and fuel tanks ...

... fighting against the pull of the centrifugal spin ...

... and if the Lander's cramped airlock was bad enough, this is many times worse. He's almost SOBBING with fear.

Behind, Harrington crawls in after him.

Vincent drags himself onwards. Reaches a dog-leg and squirms through ...

... but his suit-harness catches on something.

He's stuck.

Gripped by panic he CRIES OUT incoherently.

Twists off his helmet and sheds his equipment harness, visibly shaking, losing it --

-- Harrington crawling closer all the time --

-- but then Vincent deliberately SLAMS his head backwards into the metal. Snaps out of it. Forces himself to chill.

VINCENT
(fast, under his breath)
Blue sky ... blue sky ...

Manages to get a grip on himself ...

... just as Harrington GRABS at his ankles.

Vincent KICKS out. Wriggles free from the snag that had held him. Crawls quickly onwards.

Harrington at his heels all the way.

Vincent squeezes inbetween rows of narrow, sub-zero coolant pipes -- the dry-ice-coating stripping his flesh on contact.

Struggles through, YELLING in pain --

-- and still Harrington squirms after him -- feeling no pain at all as he touches the coolant pipes.

Vincent STOMPS Harrington in the face, trying to drive him back but having no effect --

-- then a moment of inspiration ...

He STOMPS on a coolant pipe instead. Once, twice --

SNAPS it at the joint so that super-cooled liquid nitrogen SPRAYS out, all over Harrington --

-- coating his face and shoulders and instantly freezing his flesh solid -- the ice rapidly spreading and sticking him, immobile, to the walls.

Vincent crawls quickly onwards ...

CUT TO:

93 INT. ORBITER - OXYGEN CYLINDERS. NIGHT 93

... as the hidden flare continues its super-heated BURN, the oxygen tank now glowing red-hot ...

CUT TO:

94 INT. ORBITER - ENGINE MODULE CRAWLWAY. NIGHT 94

Vincent reaches a hatch, relief washing over him that he's made it through the crawl-way -- that he'd conquered his panic.

He PUSHES open the hatch and climbs through, back into the

CENTRAL TUBE

and ROARS in agony as a hammer SMASHES down onto his arm.

Pugh -- waiting for him behind the open hatch -- his face a horribly burned rictus snarl.

Vincent SLAMS the metal hatch into Pugh's body.

SCRAMBLES along the ladder towards the Lander docking-hatch, now only yards away.

Catches sight of a countdown-clock along the way -- 1 min 35 secs ... 1 min 34 secs ...

But Pugh is too quick. Falls on Vincent again from behind.

Vincent twists around. CLAWS with his nails at Pugh's scorched eyes -- his one vulnerable spot.

Pugh flinches back. Vincent lifts his knees -- STOMPS Pugh in the face with both feet -- ONCE, TWICE ...

The seared, blackened flesh on Pugh's face CRACKS under the repeated blows.

CRUMBLES and falls away, leaving only the putrid, skeletal, bacteria-infected remains underneath.

Vincent YELLS in horror, frantically SCRABBLING to escape.

But Pugh goes after him again -- GRABS Vincent's throat with a burned, skeletal hand.

SLAMS Vincent back against the wall -- SQUEEZING.

Vincent can't breathe.
PUNCHES Pugh in the face, but to no effect.
KICKS but can't get free, his strength draining away.

Now Dalby and Brunel appear from the Command Module, slowly crawling towards them.

Only seconds to go before Vincent is completely overwhelmed.

No longer even thinking, he GROPES with his fingers -- feels a bundle of electrical cables in a duct on the wall.

PULLS one of the cables free ...

... and STABS the bare wire-ends into Pugh's vile wet mouth.

Pugh CONVULSES as the current ZAPS through him, short-circuiting nerves and muscles.

And in that split-second, Vincent PUSHES him aside.

SCRAMBLES through the hatch into the Lander.

CUT TO:

95 INT. LANDER. NIGHT 95

Yet even now, Pugh tries to follow.

Vincent SLAMS the hatch on his head.
Does it AGAIN.
And AGAIN.

Finally BANGS the hatch closed and SPINS the locking-wheel as Pugh CLAWS at it from the other side.

Vincent leaps for the Lander's instrument panel.
HITS the 'DE-COUPLE' button.

The Lander SHUDDERS as it breaks away from the Orbiter, thrown clear by the centrifugal spin.

As the Lander slowly falls away, Vincent looks back through the hatch porthole ...

Christ almighty!

Pugh is <u>still clinging</u> to the outside of the hatch.

Even now, out in the vacuum of space -- the last vestiges of moisture in his seared body slowly boiling away -- Pugh is trying to turn the locking wheel of the hatch ...

... trying to open it and get inside.

Vincent quickly PUNCHES another button -- FIRES the control jets and sends the Lander into a SPIN ...

... faster and faster, the G-forces building -- Pugh still outside the porthole, clinging on with inhuman strength ...

But Vincent abruptly CONTRA-FIRES the jets --

-- and the sudden lurching-stop WRENCHES Pugh loose.

Sends him tumbling away, utterly helpless at last, down towards Mars's surface.

Vincent watches through the main windows as he falls silently away, getting smaller and smaller.

Only then does he switch his attention back to the Orbiter.

He peers out, anxious ...

VINCENT'S POV

As an EXPLOSION rips through the Orbiter -- the booby-trapped O2 tanks finally blowing ...

... followed a split-second later by an even BIGGER EXPLOSION as the fuel-tanks go up.

The Orbiter, and all left aboard, are split asunder.

BACK TO SCENE

as Vincent slumps back, utterly exhausted.

Meanwhile, out through the windows overlooking Mars, Pugh's distant body still tumbles end over end ...

... now little more than a tiny speck, which begins to glow, then flame, as it falls through the atmosphere.

CUT TO:

96 INT. LANDER. NIGHT 96

Later.

Vincent tends his wounds, smearing on copious amounts of antiseptics with anxious, trembling fingers ...

... but the more he looks, the more cuts and grazes he finds and the more frantic he becomes ...

... until the whole thing simply becomes too much -- and he breaks down.

CRIES.

After a few moments, he stops.

Forces a ragged SIGH. Realises that there's nothing -- nothing -- to be achieved by falling apart.

Instead, he wearily draws a shot of antibiotics into a syringe, then pumps it into his forearm.

Tosses the dead syringe into the medical kit and closes it up with finality.

All he can do now is focus.

Take control of his fate.

He checks the ship-status readings on the instrument panel.

The fuel gauge reads a tiny amount -- just short of 'ZERO' -- but this doesn't surprise him. All else seems well.

Reaching for the radio head-set, he throws a switch.

A monitor screen displays 'OUTGOING TRANSMISSION'. Counts down 3, 2, 1 ...

VINCENT
Mission control this is Aurora Lander. Mayday, repeat, Mayday.
(pause)
Lander's in stable orbit but the Command ship's lost with all hands. Ditto Tantalus base. Virulent infection of unknown origin.

He's gripped by a spasm of pain. Massages his bandaged arm.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I've got the supplies destined for the base. Might last long enough for a rescue mission. So here's the deal:
(pause)
It's possible I'm infected - but I'm not gonna let myself wind up like the others. So I need to know that you can pick me up and throw everything you've got at this bacteria.
(pause)
If not, I've just enough fuel left to drop out of orbit and burn up in the atmosphere. It'll be fairly quick ... and final.

He looks at the large red 'ENGINE' button on the control panel -- then closes his eyes briefly, as if in prayer.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You'll get this in about seven minutes, so I'll be waiting for your answer. Six-eleven zulu, Aurora Lander out.

He takes off the head-set and rests back in the seat, resigned to whatever fate brings.

He looks out through the window at the eerie red Martian surface, crawling past far below. Then he glances again at the 'ENGINE' button.

Waiting for the reply.

Waiting ...

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END